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FROM A LOVER'S DIARY.

By Gilbert Parker.

As one would stand who saw a sudden light
  Flood down the world, and so encompass him,
  And in that world illumined seraphim
Brooded above and gladdened to his sight;
So stand I in the flame of one great thought,
  That broadens to my soul from where she waits,
  Who, yesterday, drew wide the inner gates
Of all my being to the hopes I sought.
Her words come to me like a summer-song,
  Blown from the throat of some sweet nightingale;
I stand within her light the whole day long,
  And think upon her till the white stars fail:
I lift my head toward all that makes life wise,
And see no farther than my lady's eyes.

Printed by special arrangement, from "A Lover's Diary: Songs in Sequence," by Gilbert Parker. Cambridge and Chicago: Stone & Kimball, 1894.

THE king of old who could not sign his name, needed a signet; the knight who went, armored and with visor down, into battle, a cognizance, that his friend might know and his foe fear him.

Ciphers, seals, crests, coats-of-arms, are held by practical folk at this end of the century mere inoperative trappings, decorative belongings of the glories of our blood and state. Yet each, in its time of sprouting, struck root in a real need. A practical necessity called for them, and they were.

This also is true of the heraldry of the plains. And as the necessity which evoked it is first modified, then entirely removed, by the multiplication of fences, the curtailing of baronial estates, and the diminishing of baronial herds, so will it fall into disuse and its character be changed.

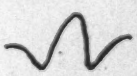
Have you any idea what a cattle brand looks like?

Most people east of the Mississippi know in a general way that there are countless herds of cattle running loose upon the vast Western ranges, whose ownership is indicated only by means of the brand they bear; and a moment's thought will show how extensive and complicated this question of cattle brands would grow to be where millions of dollars in perishable property, and thousands of different—often conflicting—interests are involved.

In the beginning, as in the beginning of heraldry, every man chose his brand with reference only to his own needs and his own fancy.

As the number of brands increased, the encountering of similar and even identical devices led to misunderstandings, quarrels, and sometimes to bloody and fatal affrays concerning the ownership of cattle so branded.

As the battle of Barnet was lost to the cause of Lancaster through a similarity of cognizances, Warwick attacking his ally Oxford by mistake, taking the Streaming Star of that warrior for the Sun of York, so on many a less historic field of our Western cattle country has bloody war been waged, and the steer finally fallen to the better man rather than the rightful owner, because an open flying A looked all too like a running W.


OPEN FLYING A.

RUNNING W.

It was thus that the necessity became evident of an official registry and publication of brands, which should bring them into being before the law, and diminish the danger of duplication—in short, a sort of College of Heralds. The business is now entirely systema-

tized, and a man's brand is registered and published just as a deed is.

METHODS OF BRANDING.

It behooves the cattleman to set this sign manual upon his ambulatory property as early in its somewhat evasive career as possible. To this end the yearly branding begins about the first of May, when the main body of the calf crop is probably from six to eight weeks old.

The cattle of a district are gathered in round-ups; the cowboys or "riders" of each ranch cut out the cows of its brand that have calves with them, throw them in a bunch to themselves, and later drive them into a corral or branding-pen, where the calves are branded and ear-marked.

So far as I know, there are but two ways of performing the branding operation: first, by roping and tying down, or holding down, the animal while the cow-puncher applies the hot branding-iron; second, by forcing the cattle which are to be branded slowly through a chute, so narrow that it will admit but one animal at a time, a cow-puncher thrusting the branding-iron through the bars of the chute against the side or hip of each animal as it is, in turn, presented to him.

This latter method, while it is very quick and easy compared with the other way, with all the time and manœuvres involved in roping, throwing, tying, holding, is only practicable where nothing is to be done but put a single brand on the animal, as in the case of rebranding, road-branding, or some such special mark, which is added subsequently to the regular brand and ear-mark that a man puts on all his calves.

In order to do this regular branding, ear-marking, etc., the calf must be roped and tied or held.

It will be at once evident to the thinking observer that, under existing methods of procedure, the responsibility for a good calf crop on any certain ranch rests more with the enterprise and "hustle" of its force of cow-punchers than with the cows themselves. The X L cow who produces X L calves has her limitations; her scope of usefulness is circumscribed, and if she presents the owner of the X L ranch with an X L calf each year, she is doing all that can be reasonably expected of her. But the cow-puncher who *brands* X L calves knows no such paltry restrictions. The number of calves he may *brand* X L is limited only to the number of unmarked, unbranded calves he can, as it were, lay his iron to.

Apropos, a tradition of the New Moon ranch says that its foreman, once upon a time, riding leisurely along at the tail of a trail herd of stock * cattle, met the foreman of the Bar 17 ranch, also riding with a bunch of stock cattle. In the Bar 17 bunch the juvenile element predominated so disproportionately as to attract the New Moon man's attention.

NEW MOON BRAND.

"Hello, Tarbush," he called. "Good cows you got there; that old longhorn's got about forty calves!"

"That's all right, about my cows," returned Tarbush easily. "That ol' Texas 's good enough; but she ain't no better'n some o' yourn I've saw."

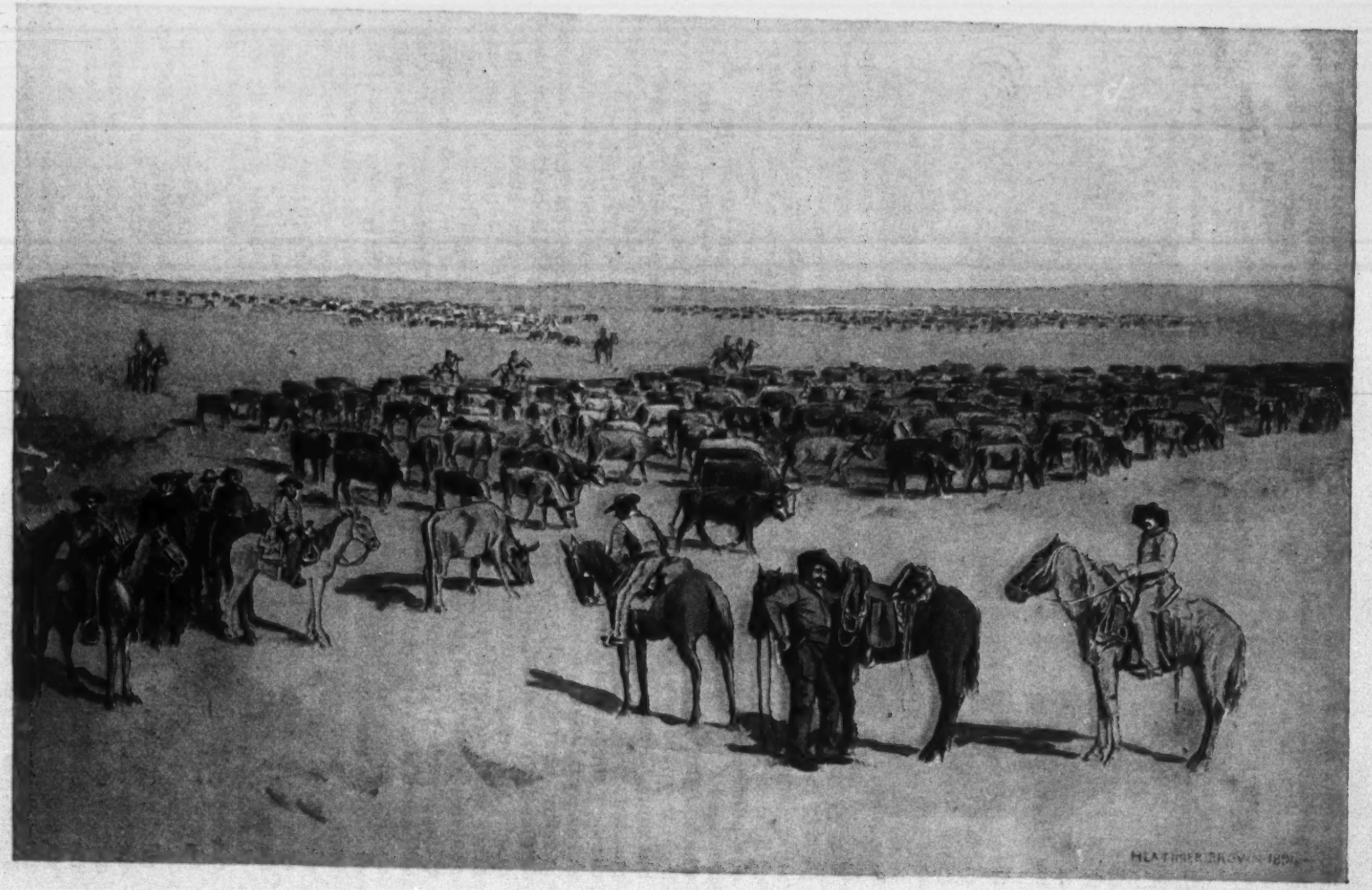
These ranches were of those that return good yearly calf crops.

Brands are put on in two ways. First there is the regular brand, where the design is printed upon the animal by a single pressure of a hot iron formed in the shape of the design, and attached to a long iron rod.

This sort of brand is usually a small, neat device. Where so large and straggling a mark is used that it would be impossible to have every part of the design come in contact with the irregular surface of an animal's body at once, it is simply drawn, or "run" upon the hide, using a long, sharp-pointed, hot iron rod for a pencil; and those so made are called "running brands."

The running-irons, or *guachos*, and the big, ugly, disfiguring, as well as cruel brands they imply, are now considered bad form by progressive cattlemen. The tendency is toward small,

* Stock cattle—so called in distinction from steers or beef cattle, the latter being universally alluded to in Texas as "beef."



A ROUND-UP.

neat brands, inconspicuously placed, often—especially in the case of fine horses—on the jaw, or inside of the hind leg.

THE HUMORS OF THE CATTLE BRAND.

Because the cattleman's life is so hard and monotonous, so bare of the diversions and amusements that lend variety and interest to urban existence, he is fain to turn everything—even the common affairs of daily living—to a jest.

One would not expect to find humor in the subject of cattle brands, but, in point of fact, quite a large proportion of them are of an avowedly jocular character; and those originally altogether serious are continually parodied, burlesqued, and jested upon.

The monogram brand P U P becomes, in the vernacular, Pup; the ranch is universally alluded to as the Pup ranch; and the tenderfoot who fails to ask, in his innocence, what sort of dogs they raise there, is felt by his entertainers to be a disappointment.

Jokes on a brand like the H E—L Down Below are obvious and staple. An odd-looking brand, brought into a district from outside, having in it no letters, numerals, or familiar figure by which it might be called, receives from the boys the mysteriously significant name of Fluidy Mustard.

THE H E L BRAND.

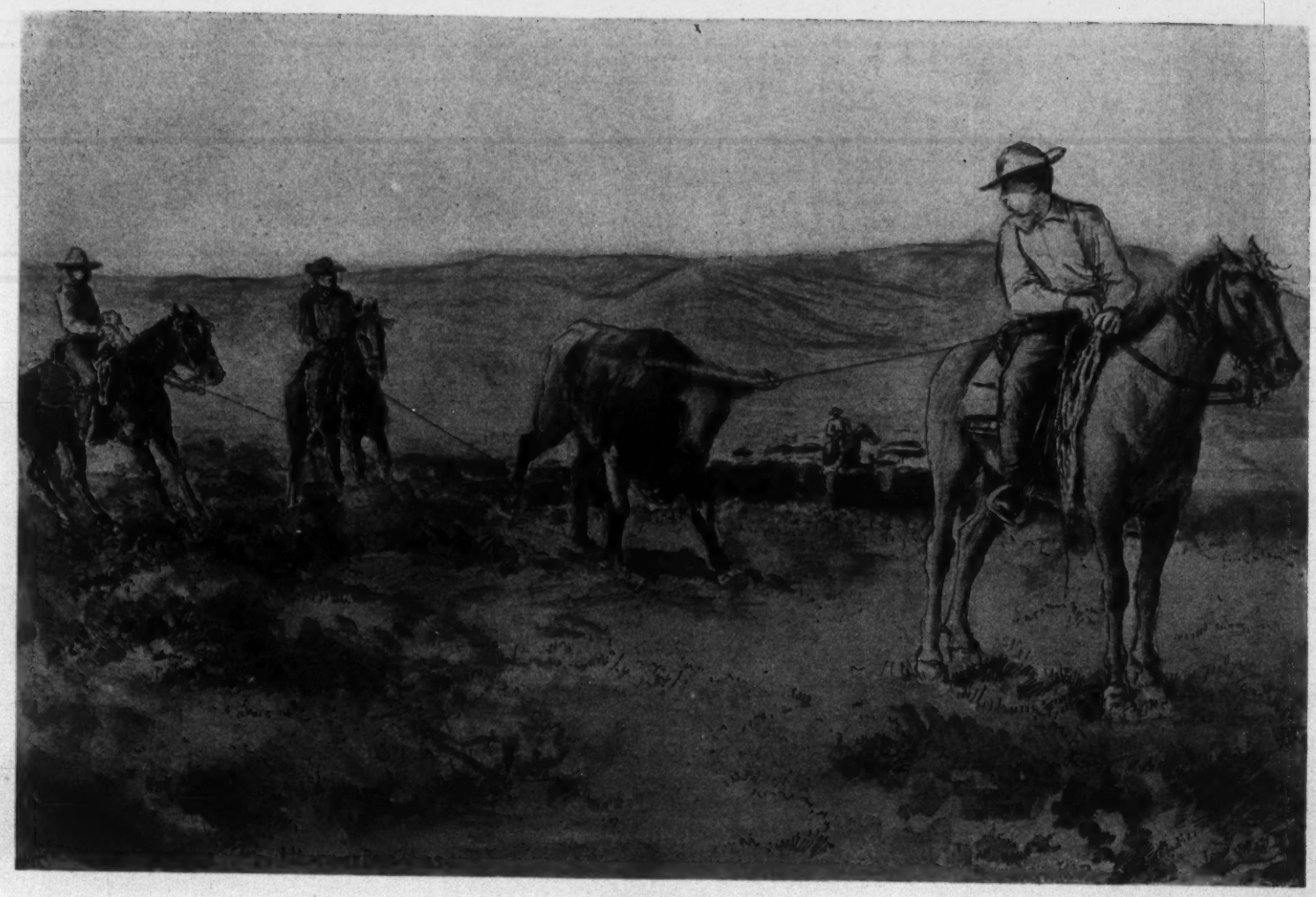
THE FLUIDY MUSTARD BRAND.

Punning brands, like punning coats-of-arms, are frequent. Old man Petrie's cattle wear a P and a Tree. Mrs. Barr, a successful ranchwoman, has for her brand a little rebus which reads her full name, K-T-bar — Katie Barr. Such names as

THE PETRIE BRAND.

KATIE BARR BRAND.

COWBOY DINNER DURING THE ROUND-UP.



ROPING A COW.

HART BRAND.

Hart, House, Head, Swann, and Fish have all been used as brands, and are each represented by a small and simple device.

HOUSE BRAND.

And speaking of successful ranch-women, cattle of more than one brand, but all wearing the same ear-mark (the "Jinglebob"), are owned and run by Mrs. S. E. Barber, a cattle queen of New Mexico, owner and builder of the beautiful Three Rivers ranch, out from White Oaks. She is a very amazing sort of woman—such a manager and handler of cattle as few men are; a phenomenally acute, courageous business woman, having created every cent of her present means with her own hand and brain—and as fond of her pretty home, a pretty dress or bonnet, of her piano, guitar, and all the little feminine softnesses, as the veriest girl.

FISH BRAND.

SWANN BRAND.

MRS. S. E. BARBER, A CATTLE QUEEN OF NEW MEXICO. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

Cattle brand designs have been largely the products of exuberant and untutored genius, and they would be as difficult to round-up, corral, rope, and tie down to known rules and classifications as the free and noble wearer himself. Still, it may be said, in a general way, that brands are most commonly rough representations of familiar objects, monogram, or rebus, with variations and combinations of these forms.

HASHKNIFE BRAND.

In the first mentioned class the Hashknife, Tin Cup, Frying-pan and Campkettle figure, along with the Hat, Bridle bit, and Spur; the latter usually called by its Spanish name, *espuela.* These are objects of even wearisome familiarity to the cattlemen; but surely some ex-miner, endeavoring to make the Texas cow yield that realization of his golden dreams which prospecting trips had failed to materialize, first branded his cattle with a Pick and Pan.

COTTON HOOK BRAND.

FRYING-PAN BRAND.

HAT BRAND.

TIN CUP BRAND.

BRIDLE BIT BRAND.

SPUR BRAND.

STIRRUP BRAND.

FORKED LIGHTNING BRAND.

The Rocking-chair and Scissors brands have a domestic suggestion about them; and, pathetically enough, were both owned by old bachelors.

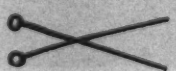
BUZZARD X BRAND.

CAMP-KETTLE BRAND.

PICK AND PAN BRAND.

The monogram found on the hide of the Texas cow differs distinctly, even structurally, from those, its rela-

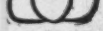
ROCKING-CHAIR BRAND.


SCISSORS BRAND.

PUP BRAND.

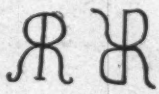
tives, which inhabit handkerchief corners, and flourish upon aristocratic stationery.

It has a style of its own, the distinguishing peculiarity being an astonishing compactness, so that many of them which may be familiar only to one's ear, are funny surprises when they come to be seen; as the PUP, BOB, and DOD, the Pup, Bob, and Dod brands. The latter looks like a heavily shaded O; and the BOB, owned by the Ports-mouth Cattle Company, at Colfax, New Mexico, is constructed upon similar lines.

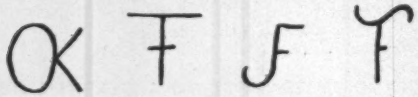

BOB BRAND.

DOD BRAND.

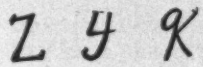
There are two RR brands, not very widely separated as to locality, but so totally unlike in appearance that no confusion arises.


THE TWO R R BRANDS.

Similar to the monogram brand, and gotten up in the same style, are those

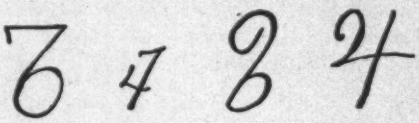

OK FF JF SF

SOME CATTLE BRAND MONOGRAMS.


THE 7L, 4J, AND 9K BRANDS.

devices of letters and numerals combined, in the manner of the 7 L, 4 J and 9 K.

Numerals are also combined in ciphers like monograms. There is the 76 ranch, the 47, the 96, and the 24.

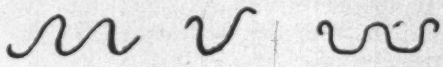

76, 47, 96, AND 24 BRANDS.

The T Anchor is a particularly pretty little brand, and has precisely the effect of a monogram, so closely are the letter and the emblem combined.

T ANCHOR BRAND.

FLYING N.

Single letters used as brands, are modified in various ways. A flying N is an N with little curves, like wings, added at its ends.


RUNNING M, V, AND W.

A running M, V, or W, is one made in a rapid, extended form.

"OLD PUD" BEELER.

OPEN A.

An open A is spread out, like the running letters, and has the cross stroke omitted. A lazy F, or T, or J is made horizontally, lying on

LAZY F. LAZY T. LAZY J.

its face or back. Such variations are almost innumerable.

The reader of ranch literature has become very familiar with the names of brands in which some segment of the circle, or the still more universal "bar," is combined with letters or numerals; as, Half Circle 6, Quarter Circle X, Bar Y, or 13 Bar.

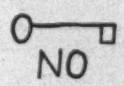
HALF CIRCLE SIX BRAND.

QUARTER CIRCLE X BRAND.

BAR Y BRAND.

THIRTEEN BAR BRAND.

The cowboy's favorite amusements also have furnished him with devices; and reminiscences of the way his money went on many a Christmas

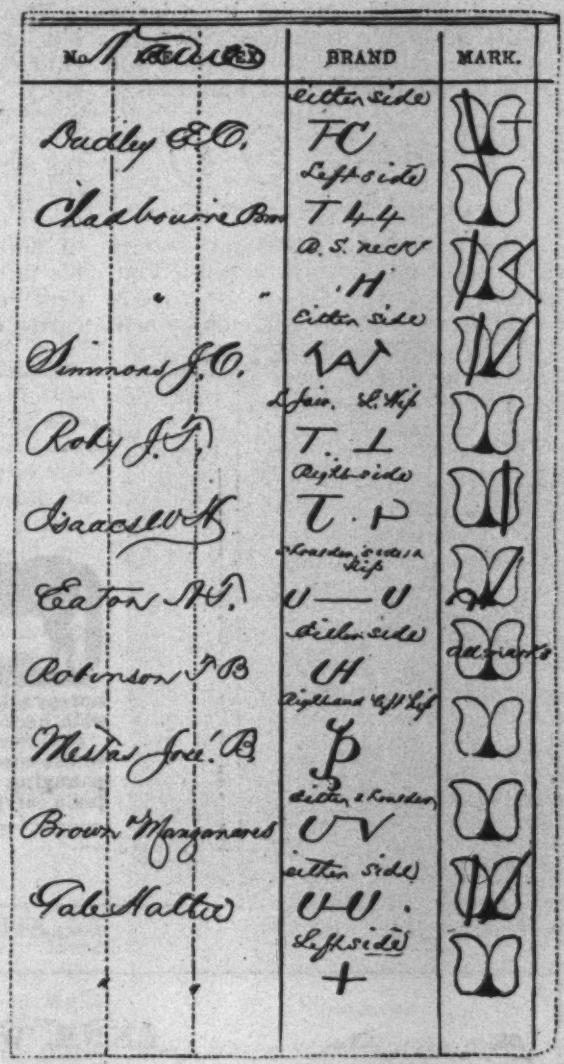


KENO BRAND.

ACE OF CLUBS BRAND.

SEVEN-UP BRAND.

spent in cow towns, appear in the design of the Seven-up, Ace of Clubs, and Keno brands.



LEAF FROM CATTLEMAN'S POCKET BRAND-BOOK—A BOOK CARRIED SO THAT HE MAY KNOW THE OWNERS OF ANY CATTLE TAKEN UP.

AS TO THE DOLLBABY BRAND.

Old Dad Morrison, who used to have his headquarters on Buck Creek, Briscoe County, in the Texas Panhandle, found how unprofitable it is to be superior to one's associates; he suffered the discomfort and tasted the pains that wait on originality.

The brand which his triumphant fancy had achieved was a shackling, rudimentary human figure, such as infancy draws upon its slate at school, above the fond legend, "This is a man."

HEAD BRAND.

The boys welcomed and loved it. They christened it the Dollbaby brand; and its proprietor thereafter rejoiced in the *sobriquet* of Dollbaby Morrison.

It was a running brand, and old Dad was apt, in the storm and stress of sketching it with a red-hot iron upon an unconsenting and recusant yearling, to draw the open circle which represented a head more like a horizontal

oval. From this cranial irregularity of the miserable Dollbaby, the cowboys came to refer to the Morrison cattle as "Old Dollbaby's Flatheads."

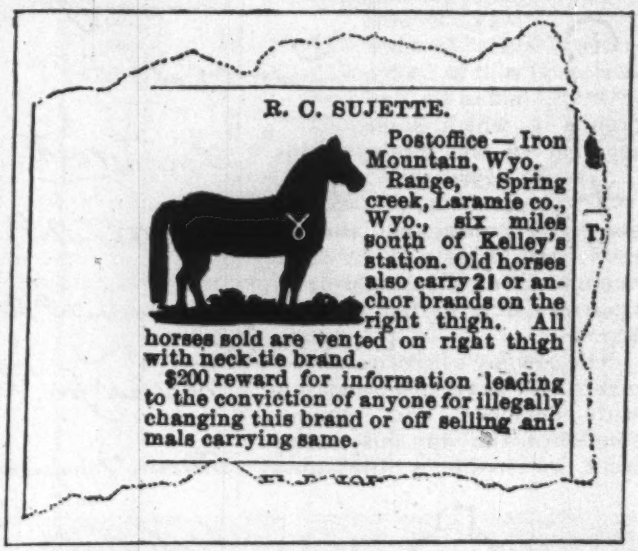
VARIATIONS IN HEAD BRAND.

When leisure and opportunity served, they would rope and tie down a Flathead or two, and dispose themselves for an afternoon's artistic employment and recreation. The blank outline circle of a head would receive a set of rude features, wearing an expression of the utmost horror and despair. Wildly protesting limbs would be added to the simple parallelogram of a torso, the arms thrust frantically up, the legs on a dead run. And then, when the old man came upon his Flatheads so "improved," he would, in cowboy vernacular, just "beef!"

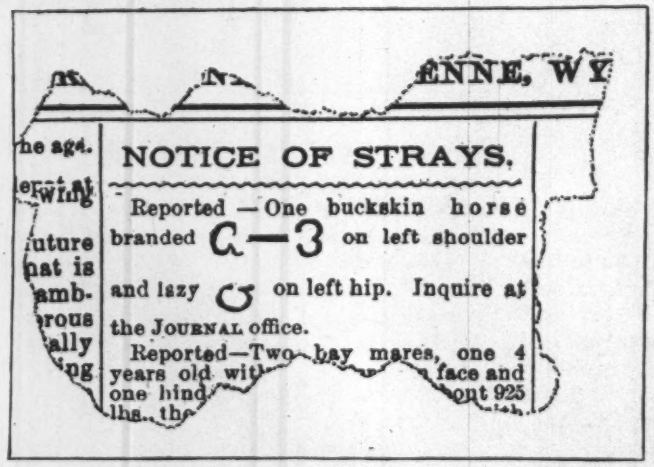
DOLLBABY BRAND.

IMPROVED DOLLBABY.

Then there were the tribulations of old Pud Beeler, which have, as it were, entwined about them the "song and story" of west Texas. Old Pud had more cattle than culture. His brand, a lazy B, on the left hip, was borne by the cattle of a neighboring ranch upon the *right* hip; and old Pud (who had never thoroughly mastered the science of differentiating his right hand from his left) was in continual and imminent danger of branding his own cattle, with his own brand, so that they might be claimed by his neighbor.


R. C. SUJETTE.
Postoffice — Iron Mountain, Wyo.
Range, Spring creek, Laramie co., Wyo., six miles south of Kelley's station. Old horses also carry 21 or anchor brands on the right thigh. All horses sold are vented on right thigh with neck-tie brand.
$200 reward for information leading to the conviction of anyone for illegally changing this brand or off selling animals carrying same.

RANCHWOMAN'S BRAND ADVERTISEMENT.


NOTICE OF STRAYS.
Reported — One buckskin horse branded C—3 on left shoulder and lazy C on left hip. Inquire at the JOURNAL office.
Reported—Two bay mares, one 4 years old

THESE BRAND ADVERTISEMENTS FILL COLUMN AFTER COLUMN OF WESTERN CATTLE COUNTRY PAPERS; AND INDEED ARE THEIR MAIN REASON FOR EXISTENCE.

Such a state of affairs appealed to and stimulated the imaginations of the cowboy *raconteurs*, who find in it the framework of half a dozen good stories. I have been told, variously, that old Pud got some person in whom he had faith to cut a facsimile of his brand upon his left spur-leather; that so equipped he would rope and throw the calf, lie down beside it in exactly its position, see

whether the cut stirrup-leather came uppermost, and brand accordingly.

Another saga declares that later, for some reason, he lost faith in the stirrup-leather mark, and had his wife, whenever he left the ranch-house with branding intentions, tie a bit of string upon what she conceived to be the left side of his pony's bridle. Then, holding the pony's head up in line with the calf's, he would look, in an agony of doubt, from one to the other, gaze intently first at the string, then at the calf, then at the stirrup-leather, and back to the calf. Or he would rope the calf, tie it down, sight at the sun, wet his finger and try the direction of the wind, examine the string, the stirrup-leather, get out and consult the big watch he had bought in Kansas City (and from which he could not tell the time of day with half the accuracy that he could by the sky), and finally, in desperation, strike an average, and put the brand upon that side to which it seemed to him the greatest number of these signs, tests, and indications pointed or leaned—uncertain to the last whether he had so marked his property as to retain it or to alienate it.

A "TENDERFOOT."

MEXICAN BRANDS.

Spanish or Mexican brands are utterly unlike the American. Here the spirit is never jocular, nor the forms grotesque. Instead of straight lines and angles, are beautiful sweeping curves, and forms of flowing grace.

The cowboy burlesques everything in life; the Mexican takes life, himself, and his cattle most seriously; and gravely sets about to make a design pleasing and graceful as well as significant, to brand upon them as mark of his ownership.

LAS LORELES.

FLOR DE TULIP.

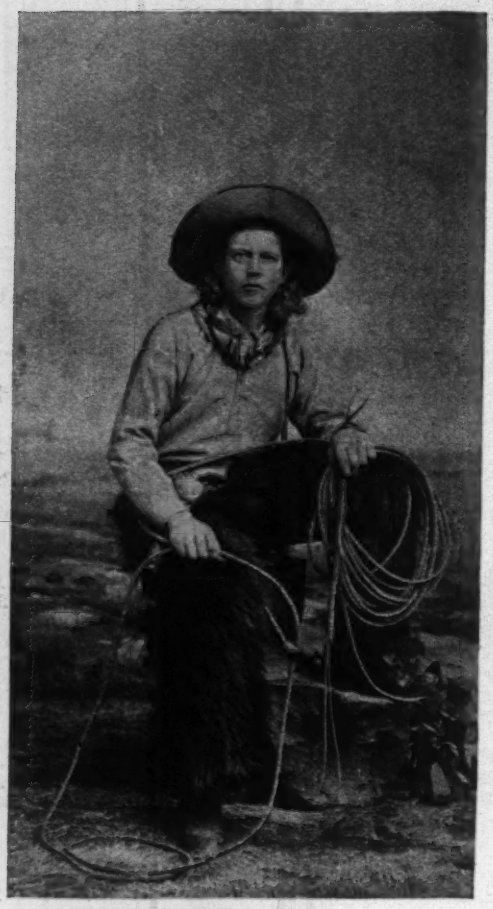
His whole cast of mind, which sets a value upon the courteous, the graceful, and the seemly; his dignity, his florid, deliberately-flowing speech with its sonorous vowels, are all expressed in such brands as *Las Loreles* and *Flor de Tulip*, whose suave curves please and satisfy the eye, and whose stem, or foundation stroke, is Hogarth's line of beauty.

CHICKEN BRAND.

When a natural form is made use of in a Mexican brand, it is conventionalized beyond recognition, as with *El Gallino* (The Chicken), and *El Cillo* (The Chair). The *Tortuga*, or Turtle—a quaint figure, suggestive of a totem or fetich—is a Mexican brand which is quite common among Spanish-speaking Indians. There are two forms; the diamond-shaped *Tortuga Chiquita*, or

CHAIR BRAND.

CHAIR BRAND—TEXAS STYLE.



A GENUINE COWBOY.

baby turtle, and the regular, adult, oval form. There is an Indian suggestion,

TURTLE. ADULT FORM.

GARCIA'S BRAND.

BENT BOW AND TOMAHAWK BRANDS.

too, about such brands as the Tomahawk, Broken Arrow and Bent Bow.

BABY TURTLE.

The famous Hipolita Garcia, whose range was on the Nueces River, in southwestern Texas, had for his brand a perfect circle in broad outline.

BROKEN ARROW BRAND.

In Mexican, as well as in American brands, letter devices preponderate. In a typical design, such as *Espuela de Pablo Sanchez*—The Spur of Paul Sanchez—the object and the initials P S are wrought into one graceful figure.

THE SPUR OF PAUL SANCHEZ.

The spur stands "mouth up," its rowel stem being elongated downward to form the stalk of the letter P; the S lying horizontally below, as base.

The Mexican of any means is particularly apt to use an initial or monogram brand. Upon this he grafts the initials of his sons, as they come along, until the device represents the whole male side of the family, and becomes, in such sort, a kind of coat-of-arms.

GENERAL ESCOBEDO'S BRAND.

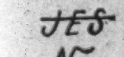
Such is the brand of General Escobedo of Chihuahua, Mexico. The letters—as is usual in Mexican brands—are very much modified, to make them blend into a symmetrical figure.

The first character in this device is the General's initial, a round-cornered, antique-looking E, used horizontally (the Texas cowboy would call it a lazy E), its crossing running down to form the main stem, or column, to which a downward curve added on the right side, forms a little *h*, for the General's first son Hernan; and a somewhat smaller, upward curve, upon the left, a little *j* for Juan, second son; third, and last, the letter C, "mouth down," representing the interest taken in poor Carlos, the black sheep of the family.

The position of the brand upon the animal may be as significant as the brand itself. A Half Circle 6 on the hip may indicate an entirely different ownership from that marked by a Half Circle 6 on the shoulder or side; and in advertising his brand a man usually states where it is placed on the animal, or specifies that it marks his ownership wherever placed—on the hip, side, shoulder or jaw.

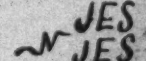
COUNTER-BRANDING.

When a brand is superseded, by purchase or by the discovery that it has been wrongly or erroneously placed



OLD STYLE COUNTER-BRANDING.

upon the animal which bears it, the practice formerly was for the purchaser, if it is a sale, or the proper owner, if a case of wrongful branding, to burn a bar through the existing brand, as one would cross out a word in writing, put his own brand above or below it, and again on that part of the animal where it properly belongs, if this superseded mark was differently situated.



NEW WAY OF COUNTER-BRANDING, THE REPETITION OF THE BRAND SHOWING THAT IT IS INOPERATIVE.

But counter-branding is now done by duplicating the undesired brand, and placing the new or rightful one upon the animal where it belongs. It is not now the custom to run a bar through the discarded brand.

MANY (BRANDING) IRONS IN THE FIRE.

A man with extensive cattle interests will usually have a number of brands. This comes about in a variety of ways. For instance, after having established his own, he buys all or a portion of another. If he buys them all, or if the remainder are held and run entirely removed from his range, so that there is no danger of confusion, he may run this purchased brand of cattle in addition to his own, and with no further mark upon them; so that you very commonly see a big cattleman or company publishing a long list of cattle and horse brands as belonging to and being run by them.

It is also common for a man to hold partnership interests in several different brands, probably scattered over widely separated portions of his State, or even in different States. Such arrangements make ample and glowing opportunities for stealing. But then the entire cattle business fairly bristles with such possibilities, which is the reason that we hear so much of maverick branders, rustlers, cattle thieves; and why the penalty of this crime—when once fastened upon an individual—was, in the early days, capital and summary.

Beside his regular ranch brands, a cattleman has also other little brands, used for special temporary purposes. Such is the "vent" (vend?) brand, a design regularly registered and published by him as placed below his own brand upon all cattle which he sells, to advertise the fact that they have passed lawfully out of his possession.

Also, when cattle are bought in one place to be driven to another and sold, a small, inconspicuous brand is put upon them, to protect them while on the trail. This is called a "road" brand, and is a device separate and distinct from the owner's regular permanent ranch brands.

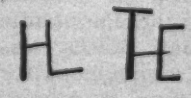
The drover may have bought cattle of several different brands. Without a road brand he is liable, when passing herds similarly branded, to lose cattle by their being innocently taken up with these herds. Then, too, he can only identify or describe his strays by this road brand, since they may be from any one of the several brands in his drove.

BRAND STEALING.

All the cattle stealing is by no means the work of such rustlers as steal the animals bodily and drive them away. Theft is quite as extensively and continually carried on by the tampering with and manipulation of brands; and the methods of these manipulators are many and ingenious.

There is, first and simplest, the mere addition of a letter or letters, or numerals, to a brand; or of flourishes to a plain letter to make a flying letter of it; or of new parts to any design, to entirely alter its character and, if possible, leave no suggestion of the original brand in the new device so formed.

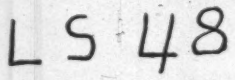
It was in this way that a certain foreman went through his employer's cattle, shortly after the spring round-ups, when the brands were still new upon the calves, and, with three strokes of his iron, made of the monogram brand H L, a new monogram, which he had set up as his own brand, consisting of the letters T H E.



H L BRAND MADE TO T H E.

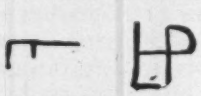
"BUT ALL THE EEND-GATE RODS UV OUR WAGGINS WUZ BURNT PLUMB OUT!"

The same transformation was accomplished, with only two straight strokes, when L S was made into 48.



L S BRAND MADE TO 48.

As a result of these little manifestations of ingenious enterprise, the respective artists are at the present moment devoting their talents and abilities (under some compulsion, and in other lines of industry) to the State of Texas, at Huntsville.



LAZY F MADE TO H L P.

The owner of the Lazy F brand has suffered in this manner at the hands of dishonest cattle-men who made his brand into H L P.

The great ranch of the Capitol Syndicate (so called because its domain, including portions of nine Panhandle counties as big as small States, was taken by the company in payment for the Texas Capitol building at Austin) has a western boundary fence which stretches, in a straight, unbroken line, two hundred and ten miles, north and south, and grazes some one hundred and twenty thousand head of cattle upon its vast reaches of pasture.

Every animal upon this ranch is branded with the same brand—the letters X I T. This device was carefully chosen, and it

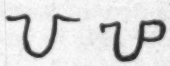
FIVE-POINTED STAR MADE FROM X I T.

was long thought that it could not be successfully tampered with or altered. But a friend recently showed me (with a pencil and paper) how a cowboy had shown *him* a most successful conversion of the three letters into a very respectable five-pointed star, with a little cross in the centre, all by the addition of nine strokes of the pencil (*or* the iron).

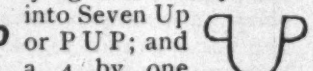
For purposes of annexation the open Hat brand is easily converted by a single vertical stroke, into a flying T; a flying U is readily made into Seven Up or P U P; and a 4 by one stroke into a capital S.

OPEN HAT BRAND.

FLYING T.

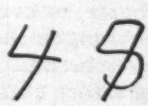


FLYING U ALTERED TO SEVEN UP.



FLYING U ALTERED TO P U P.

As a last resort, the least ingenious or enterprising brand thief can cover, or blur clumsily over, almost any mark, with a brand called the Hog-pen, or Window-sash.



HOG-PEN BRAND.

A man who designs to acquire cattle by tampering with and adding to brands, would not have a branding-iron made with which to print on the animal the desired additions; such an object would

be too deadly a piece of evidence. The supplementary marks are always "run;" that is, made in the manner of running brands.

As there are times and seasons and places where the presence of the regular iron for this purpose would be regarded with suspicion, very curious and unlikely bits of iron rod are sometimes made to do service.

I once heard a thrifty old woman tell how she, with her two grown sons and a daughter-in-law, made a drive, full of peril and hardship, from somewhere in middle Texas up into a Panhandle range; crossing dangerous rivers at unfamiliar and treacherous boggy fords; threatened and beset by Indians and lawless characters; their herd often depleted by the depredations of cattle thieves and big wolves, and by losses from drowning, bogging up, or the death of weaklings from thirst or hard driving when the distance was great from one living stream to the next.

"Well," she concluded, with a cheerful grin, "we hilt our own, anyhow. We started out 'th twenty-five hundred head, an' we tuck three thousand into the ranch. But all the eend-gate rods uv our waggins wuz burnt plumb out!"

"SLEEPER BRANDING."

In addition to his brand or brands, a man has his own special ear-marks, the two together identifying an animal very conclusively. It is these ear-marks, and the reliance placed upon them, especially in noting the ownership of a calf, which makes the practice of "sleeper branding" possible.

To judge of a calf's ownership, a cattle-man will invariably glance first at its ears. If he at once recognizes the ear-marks as his own, he is very likely to look no farther; for calves are branded and ear-marked at one "sitting," and the existence of the ear-mark presupposes the brand.

Knowing this, the dishonest foreman or cow-puncher of a non-resident ranch owner ear-marks all the young calves at the regular branding time, but omits to brand a number of them. The correct ear-mark carries them safely along, even if the owner himself comes out and looks around at things.

Then, later, the schemer quietly catches up and ties down these sleeper-marked calves, wherever he finds them out of the way a little, and taking a bit of poker from his boot-leg or saddle-pocket, he makes a little blaze, heats the iron, and puts upon the animal a brand which he has already advertised about as his own, probably having placed it upon a few cows he has bought.

If he is sharp and watchful, and his employer an easy-going, unsuspicious man, he may keep this practice up for two or three years, holding forth the idea that he is buying and otherwise acquiring cattle, and running his herds along on much the same range as his employer's.

Presently he goes to ranching on his own hook, when it is not unfrequently discovered that he is much better off than his late employer, as well as a much better cattle-man. More than one big brand and big fortune of the earlier days, had its beginnings in this cute little trick.

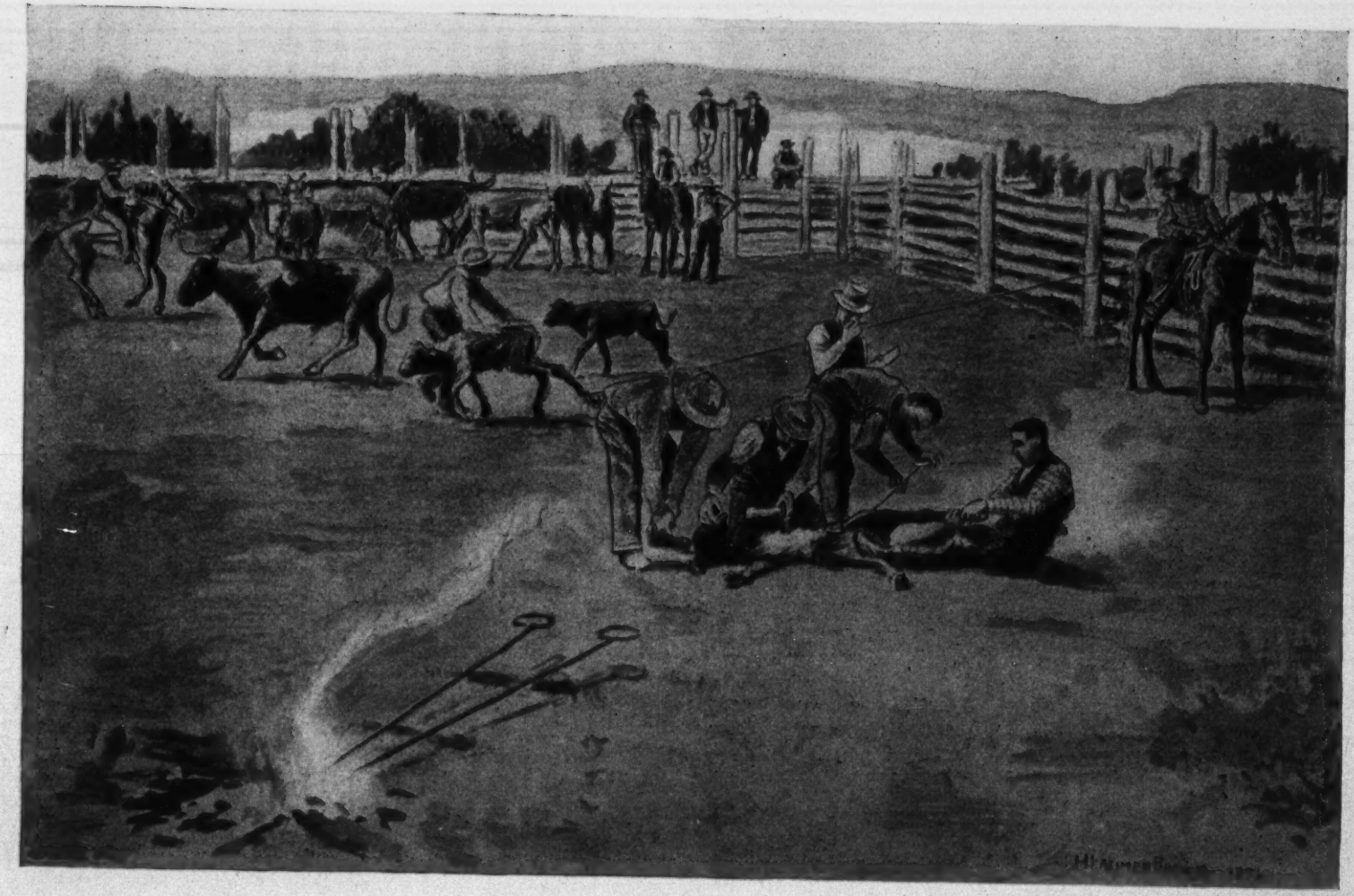
A "PICKED" BRAND.

A most unscientific sort of brand stealing, and yet one which serves its brief temporary purpose as well as more elaborate means, is accomplished by simply picking out tufts of hair, by the help of a jack-knife, in the lines of the desired figure.

This kind of brand forging is only available for making whole brands, because it does not look so exactly like regularly burned brands as to be safely used in altering and adding to them. Animals so acquired are kittle-cattle, indeed, and must be beefed or disposed of before the hair grows out and the fake brand disappears.

AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

The subject of the brand discovers itself, sooner or later, in one way or another, in most of the affairs of cattle-country life. The uncompanioned children of lonely and remote ranches play at roping and branding



BRANDING.

each other. The wife of the kindly, liberal-hearted cattle-man will nearly always be given her own brand; often his little girls as well.

These brands may begin in a little bunch of cows or a few brood mares; but with no demands upon the "increase," they soon grow to very respectable herds of cattle or bunches of horses.

It sounds wonderfully picturesque and Western to hear a dainty little ninety-pound woman, speaking of some feminine or artistic luxury, remark, "Well, I can have it if I can sell off some beef this fall;" or to have a bright girl, discussing the relative desirability of a course at an art school, or an Eastern pleasure trip, assure you that she can easily meet the expense of whichever she decides upon by selling her 1890 crop of colts, which are now four years old, and just broken.

CUPID AND THE RUNNING BRAND.

You would not suppose that the small, blind, insufficiently-clad deity of the bow and quiver would ever neglect his classic weapon to concern himself with so gross and barbarous a utensil as a branding-iron. Yet such things have been.

I have heard the tale how that, away back in the seventies, there appeared (along with the rest of her family), in one of the far-out plain counties of the Texas cattle country, a fair one by the romantic and mellifluous name of Lilybel Plunkett.

For the capricious and uncertain favor of this the only marriageable young lady in the district, all the susceptible and unattached cowboys (of which class the population almost wholly consisted) strove together eagerly and without ceasing, mavericking right and left everything they could lay their hands on, with a running brand L I L, until, when the tenderfoot she had all along been engaged to came out and married her, she brought him great herds of L I L cattle, with which they gayly set up a ranch beneath the noses of the forlorn celibate community.

Also, there was Buck Redmond, who, when he had a quarrel with his sweetheart (old man Drake's daughter, known facetiously as "the duck"), proceeded to singe upon the hide of an incidental maverick his burning resentment of the scorns, gibes, and indignities she had heaped upon him in the heat of her anger and the immunity of her sex.

It was a delicate example of cowboy repartee, the retort bucolic, to catch up this unfortunate third party, brand it all over its helpless bovine side in great sprawling letters, D U C K, and turn the capering *bon mot* loose where it could not fail of meeting the eyes of the cruel fair one.

The performance served its purpose of deadly affront; the Drake boys holding for some time that the obligation was upon them to kill somebody about it, as no fluid less expensive than heart's-blood could properly wash out such an insult. And I think they did shoot to death—before anything like a reconciliation could be brought about—the calf.

THE REVERSIBLE CRUELTIES OF BRANDING.

Some tender souls have been much harrowed over the cruelty of the practice of branding. As an unprejudiced reporter, one who hath no cattle of his own—to brand or not to brand—I would say that my observation has led me to believe the operation is not usually attended with any great pain. I have commonly seen even very small calves jump up when released after branding, shake their heads, give a few angry bleats, and go quietly to feeding.

Indeed, if you come to it, what right has man to seize upon his humble brother animals, slay them to devour their flesh, to wear their beautiful skins in addition to that he received from a common Giver, or enslave them that they may perform his labor for him? Having bolted such a camel as this, it is scarcely worth while to take much note of so inconsiderable a gnat as the brief smart of a cattle-brand.

Nathless, I once did hear the barbarities of branding denounced, and

that feelingly, by one who had experience thereof. And yet the impression left upon the mind was more equivocal than conclusive.

He was a youth who had come to the Panhandle to be a Texas cowpuncher. Being set to brand a lusty yearling, it hauled off—as he bitterly phrased it—at the first breath of the hot iron, kicked out four of his front teeth (which were still in Texas, and their positions in his mouth unfilled, when he told me the story some years later in Kansas City), knocked him over, kicked loose from its captors, and dragged him all across the fire, rolling him head and heels in amongst the hot irons, and ran bellowing away, leaving him with several large burns, a permanent flaw in his pronunciation, and a deep-rooted aversion to the cruelties of cattle-branding.

"TOLD IN CONFIDENCE."

By Celia Eliza Shute.

"GOT that fire built yet, Ory?"

"No, marm."

"Well, if you ain't the beatum for dallyin', Ory Pease! Can't you step round a little livelier for once?"

A loud rattle of the stove lifter and covers convincingly testified to an attempt being made at more energetic action.

"Put on the big b'iler, Ory, an' fill it up to the brim. Mis' Holman's wash this week's a marster one, an' we've got to work spry to git it out early. Did Jake draw a plenty of water?"

"Plenty."

The voice of the invisible "Ory" was in harmony with the clang of the stove utensils. In the interval of silence that followed, the brisk, jerky tones from the room adjoining announced, "There! I'm a-comin' at last. It's took me longer than usual this mornin' to git my hair bobbed. That plaguy neuralgy takes me so in the shoulder every once in a while, seems as though I must holler right out;" and a middle-aged woman, whose figure was composed of billowy layers of flesh, tied in at the waist line by broad gingham apron strings, appeared, and with an inclusive glance inspected the preparations made.

"'Twon't take water long to bile on top of such a fire as that," she said, approvingly. "That b'iler 'll hold more without slopping over. Where's the dipper?"

Ora thrust it within her mother's reach, and putting the cover of the boiler on noisily, walked to the kitchen door and looked vaguely around. There was a look of discontent on her small brown face.

The little house stood alone on the crest of a pygmy hill, which on the right sloped gradually to a winding river, from which it was separated by a thick growth of trees and shrubbery. In front the hillside was smooth and green. On the two remaining sides, fruit trees, currant bushes, flower beds, and vegetable patches spread themselves about with a gratifying lack of disposition to crowd each other. There was a walk from the seldom-used front door to the gate at the foot of the hill, bordered on both sides by whitewashed stones, heaps of which, piled in pyramidal form, decorated the smooth plots on either side of this walk. The freshness and cleanness of early morning was everywhere present. There was exhilaration and inspiration in the view presented of valley, river, and mountain.

"Nice day, ain't it?" remarked Mrs. Pease, cheered by the glimpse of sum-

Note.—"Told in Confidence," one of about a thousand stories submitted in the recent McClure prize story contest, was awarded the second of the five prizes offered—two hundred dollars. The author, Miss Celia Eliza Shute, lives at Exeter, N. H.—Ed. McClure's Magazine.

mer beauty that greeted her as she passed the open window.

"Nothin' wonderful about it as I see," answered Ora, almost savagely. "It's fit as any day to work in. I don't see as it makes any difference what kind of a day it is when we've got to slave over wash tubs and suds. I'm sick of it all!"

Mrs. Pease made no answer, but glanced furtively at her daughter's clouded face whenever the exigencies of work brought her near the kitchen door. "It's all her seein' Charlotte Frost racin' by arter Steve Judkins last night," she said to herself. "'T won't do no good to speak of it, though, for she'd deny it up an' down. That's got to be straightened out, or Ory'll be down sick with worryin'."

STEVE JUDKINS.

"Don't stand there any longer, Ory," she called, peremptorily, a moment later, with a change of sentiment born of the demand for action. "We've lost a good quarter of an hour already waitin' for that pesky fire."

The girl came back into the room dragging after her by one end a heavy wash bench, on top of which the two women placed a tub of wet linen. Another was already resting on a broad-topped stool, and Ora and her mother plunged their bared arms into the soapy masses without further delay. Ora's mood was inimical to conversation, and no sound was heard for some time except the swish, swish of the linen, as piece after piece was dragged through the suds to take its place on the zinc-ribbed washboards.

"Soon's we git 'em rubbed out once we'll have breakfast," said Mrs. Pease at last, panting a little from her violent exertions. "S'pose you run out, Ory, an' see if there's any fresh eggs in the nest. I'll finish rubbin' out."

"I'm most done," answered Ora, snapping a handkerchief through the air as she spoke. "Ain't this a pretty one, mar?" She held the embroidered web up to view. "I don't see why I can't have such things as well as Mis' Holman."

"What earthly good would they do you?" asked her mother, scornfully. "Them things is just for show. I'd rather put my money somewheres else."

Ora shrugged her shoulders pettishly. She was in a mood where sympathy would have been as irritating to her as opposition. Her lips opened as though she were about to continue the argument, but closed again as the front gate squeaked on its hinges and hasty footsteps were heard coming up the walk.

"Who in natur' can be comin' at this time in the mornin'?" inquired Mrs. Pease, excitedly. "You don't look fit to go to the door," she added, rapidly surveying her daughter's splashed apron and steamy face. "I'll have to go myself, though I don't look any too trig."

Ora looked calmly indifferent, but no sooner had her mother left the room than she ran behind the door that opened into the little front entry, and listened eagerly.

"Why, good mornin', Steve," she heard her mother say in a loud crescendo. "Come right in. Yes, Ory's up. We're early risers here," and her cheeks blazed with sudden color as she flew into the bedroom, tidied her hair, wiped her hot face, and quickly substituted a neat white apron for the gingham one she had on.

Ora had a face that was very attractive in spite of freckles and reddish hair. Her eyes were brown and bright, her teeth unusually fine. As she came timidly into the little parlor, in answer to her mother's summons, Steve Judkins made up his mind that he had hitherto failed to realize fully what a very pretty girl she was.

"I'm going to drive my new horse

"AIN'T THIS A PRETTY ONE, MAR?"

down to the beach this afternoon," he explained promptly, "an' I came round to see if you wouldn't like to go too. You can, can't you?"

"Well, I don't know about it," answered Ora, hesitatingly. "There's all them clothes to do to-day, anyway. Monday's the hardest day in the week always."

"Of course you can go, Ory," hastily interjected Mrs. Pease. "We can leave some of the things over till to-morrow as well as not, an' the ride will do you lots of good."

"You give me a turn I shan't git over in a hurry," she said to her daughter, when Steve, after a few remarks, had gone off smiling at the success of his errand. "Charlotte Frost would have stood a mighty good chance of gittin' that ride if I hadn't spoke up for you. You act dreadful senseless about some things, Ory."

Ora made a petulant movement. She understood her mother's allusion, but being peculiarly sensitive and shy, words did not come easily to her. Now she hastily divested herself of her company splendor and went back to her work, but her face had brightened wonderfully. Mrs. Pease caught its radiant expression by cautious, surreptitious glances, but said nothing. To have openly recognized the dawning content would have been fatal to its continuance, she knew.

Punctually at two o'clock (the earliest hour at which it would be possible to expect Steve) Ora was ready for her drive and fidgetting about from one front window to the other. Nothing but Mrs. Pease's extreme gratification at the coming event prevented her from commenting cuttingly on this uneasiness. In the back yard a whirligig clothes-drier, stationary from lack of a breeze, bore on its concentric lines the morning's work. Ora's conscience was clear, her face bright. Her pretty little figure in its blue dress climbing over the buggy wheel sent positive rapture into her mother's heart. On one thing this hard-working woman had set her heart. She meant that Ora should marry Steve Judkins, if it could be brought about by any means possible to her. Steve had a fine farm and considerable money, and his partiality for Ora had been sufficiently marked to have been the subject of comment in the village. It was the mother's strongest desire that Ora should be spared the life of drudgery that had been her own daily portion.

"She's a pretty girl, my Ory!" she said to herself, with a curious tightening at her throat, as she watched Steve tuck the gray laprobe over Ora's dress and straighten himself as he took the reins. "Charlotte Frost shan't have him!" Her pale eyes lighted with sudden determination. "Somehow I know as well as I want to that Steve means suthin' by taking Ory out this arternoon. If I could only do something to help it along! I might as well go up and see Susan Frost by and by. Perhaps I can find out if he's been goin' there lately. Guess I'd better go as soon as I can git things reg'lated, for it looks thundery over in the west."

The afternoon was fast waning when Mrs. Pease came out, locked the door, hid the key under the upper step, shook the gate violently to be sure she had hasped it after her, and started on her journey with a briskness that was astonishing considering her physical proportions and the upward slope of the road.

The thunder clouds were piling higher, and apparently absorbing all the air. The afternoon grew hot and breathless. On the tall elms that bordered the village street down which she passed, the leaves hung as heavy and motionless as if carved of malachite. The roadway, with its grass-fringed sidewalks, lay white under the glare of the brilliant sun. Mrs. Pease's face was crimson when she stopped in front of a little brown house with a front piazza sheltered by two umbrageous horse-chestnut trees. The promise held out by their clustering branches stirred the tired woman to ascend the steps with many gasps and sighs.

"Good land!" cried a voice from an upper window. "If here ain't Mis' Pease!"

The narrow green shutter that had swung open to admit of this remark's descent was drawn to hastily, and a

moment later the door blinds flew open with a jerk, and a quick-motioned, shrewd-faced little woman, clad in a Mother Hubbard wrapper of brown and white calico, as smooth and fresh as water and smoothing irons could make it, appeared.

"What ever made you start out on such a day?" said she, reproachfully, presenting a palmleaf fan. "Not but what I'm always glad to see you, Mis' Pease, but seems 'sif you'd a been more comfortable if you'd waited until after sundown."

"There ain't much doubt about that," admitted Mrs. Pease, whose breath came with startling audibleness. "If 'tain't too much trouble I'd like a glass of water, Mis' Frost. My throat's terribly dry, wadin' through all that dust."

The alert little woman darted through the straw-carpeted entry-way as rapidly as though the thermometer had been more creditably employed than in gratifying a ceaselessly aspiring ambition, and was back again as promptly.

"Drink this tea instead," urged she, producing a blue willow-pattern cup and saucer, from which a delightful odor arose. "Water's dangerous when you're so het up."

"That's real kind of you, Mis' Frost," said Mrs. Pease, gratefully. "There ain't nothin' I like better'n a cup o' tea when I git over-heated, but of course I wasn't goin' to speak of it."

"I relish it more'n anything myself such days," said Mrs. Frost, watching the red patches grow paler on her visitor's forehead and cheeks. "This piazzy's real comfortable when the sun gits round behind the house."

"Ory often wishes we had one on our house," said Mrs. Pease, contemplatively. "It's the fust thing we shall have if we ever git forehanded, but I believe in lettin' well-enough alone."

"Ory's notions are a little high," answered Mrs. Frost, with a certain meaning, scanning Ora's mother's face narrowly to discern any indications of resentment at her freedom. "You've had a hard time to git your place clear, an' I never favored gittin' into the mire when you can keep out. Why didn't Ory come round with you?"

"Steve Judkins carried her to the beach this arternoon with his new horse," replied Mrs. Pease, trembling at the opportune inquiry that enabled her to state the news she had come so far to tell, without absolutely forcing it into the conversation. "It's a reg'lar beauty. S'pose you ain't seen it yet?"

"La, yes! Indeed I have!"

Mrs. Frost spoke the truth, for Steve Judkins had driven by that very afternoon with his new possession on his way to get Ora, but with the perspicacity peculiar to certain minds she divined Mrs. Pease's uneasiness at the indefiniteness of her reply, and determined not to lessen it by any explanatory remark.

"He always said Ory should have the fust ride," added Mrs. Pease, unconscious how much anxiety was being manifested in her florid face.

"I ain't sayin' she didn't."

Mrs. Pease did not lack in penetration, and could see that Mrs. Frost was endeavoring to annoy her. She was angry, and straightening herself, made a bold and unconsidered stroke.

"'Twould be funny if she hadn't," said she, coloring with the effort she was making. "I s'pose some day 'twill be hern."

The rockers on the chair occupied by Mrs. Frost made a wide scratch on the painted boards of the piazza as she gave an involuntary lurch forward. Two little spots of red flamed in her sallow cheeks, and her eyes snapped visibly.

"Do tell! Well, I hadn't s'posed it was so serious! Then Ory's really caught him at last!"

Mrs. Pease was conscious of a tumultuous beating of all her pulses as she stared her questioner in the face. To hear the inference drawn from her presumptuous declaration voiced in such plain and unmistakable terms, almost paralyzed her.

"I ain't at liberty to say anything more yet," she stammered, confusedly. "An' you mustn't mention it to a soul outside till I give you leave."

"That's queer; I should think you'd

"WELL, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT IT," ANSWERED ORA, HESITATINGLY.

want it spread," said Mrs. Frost, lifting her thin eyebrows. "Steve's the catch of the place. If 'twas my Charlotte I wouldn't let the grass grow under my feet before I'd circ'late it pretty freely."

"Ory's queer about them things. She'd be awful mad if she knew I'd told," returned Mrs. Pease, whose brain seemed to be spinning around erratically.

"I shall tell Charlotte, anyway," insisted Mrs. Frost. "Steve Judkins took quite a shine to her one while, an' he's invited her to ride with his new horse some day. If he an' Ory are goin' to git married he ain't no business to be takin' other gals to ride, an' she shan't go. She'll have to have a good reason, though, or there won't be any stoppin' her."

Mrs. Pease's resources seemed on the point of deserting her. Diplomacy was as foreign to her as the telling of untruths. Her pale blue eyes were full of a perplexity that mystified Mrs. Frost, though the latter had not ventured to doubt the truth of her visitor's statement, disagreeable though it was to her.

"There's a partic'lar reason why I can't say any more just now," feebly reiterated Mrs. Pease. "Promise me faithful you won't tell what I said to anybody, not even Charlotte."

The request, which partook strongly of the nature of entreaty, had scarcely been voiced when the green shutter above flew back with a bang that sent both women half out of their chairs, and a sharp young voice called out triumphantly:

"I've hearn it all without bein' told, Mis' Pease! You ought to be more careful about tellin' secrets under open windows. I'll be down in a minute."

The tones of the sarcastic voice fell like lashes on Mrs. Pease. She sank into her chair as helpless as a wounded creature, her face ashy, her heavy mouth twitching pitifully. The quality of Mrs. Frost's questioning gaze made her draw her breath with difficulty, but that was as nothing compared to the prospect of Charlotte's coming attack. They could hear her bouncing through the upper hall and down the stairs, like a herald of the approaching storm, and in a moment more she came out. She was a tall girl with a massive frame and big hands and feet. Her abundant yellow hair rose in a fuzzy mass round her pink and white face. Her white teeth were exposed in a smile that bordered on the malicious.

"I've been sittin' at the winder hearin' every word you said," she began; "so you see it ain't any use to warn mar not to tell me. I'm s'prised enough to hear about Ory. From things I've seen an' heard I didn't think Steve would make up his mind so quick."

The girl's audacity acted on Mrs. Pease like an invigorating douche. It aroused her to self-assertion. The saucy tone, the self-conscious smile, the defiant attitude, all had a part in her partial restoration.

"I never heard of Steve's payin' any particl'ar attention to anybody besides Ory," she advanced, with some spirit. "If he has I'd like to know who 'tis. Speak up, Charlotte, if you've got anything to say."

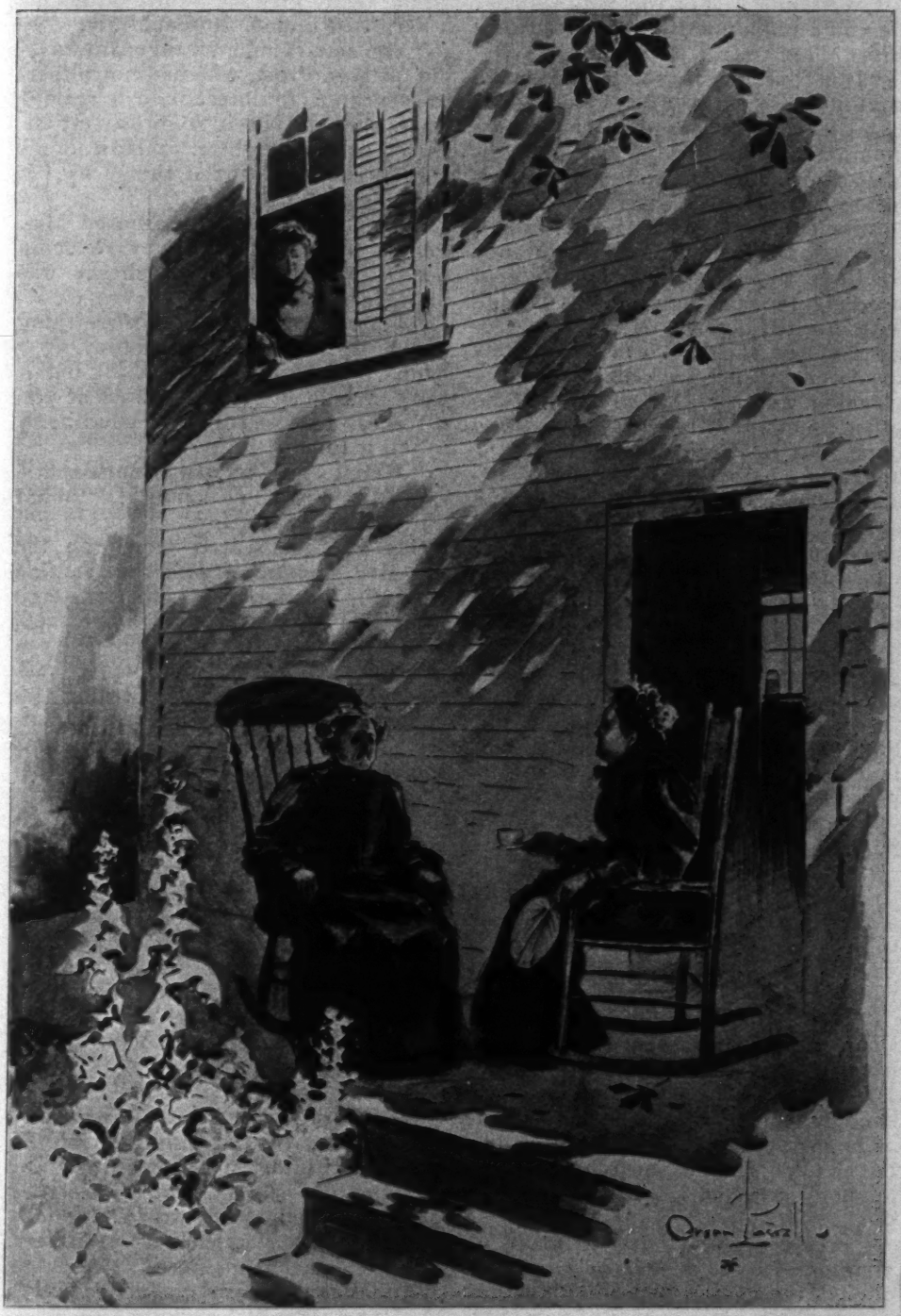
"Well, I have. Steve Judkins has paid me as much attention as ever he did Ory. You needn't s'pose that because he's carried her to ride off an' on he ain't carried no other girls. I guess I've been as often as she has, an' he called here reg'lar all the spring till I went up to Aunt Maria's. You needn't tell me Ory's caught him in that little time, because I won't believe you if you do!"

"Charlotte!" remonstrated Mrs. Frost, scandalized at her daughter's plain speaking.

"Don't Charlotte me, mar Frost! I know what I'm a-sayin'."

The girl's large face was scarlet with excitement. She had stationed herself directly in front of Mrs. Pease, her hands on her hips, and her tall body swaying as she talked. Her eyes had sparkles in them. Even Mrs. Frost quailed under their growing fierceness.

"So, there's a partic'lar reason you don't tell more, is there?" she went on, jeeringly. "It's my private opinion you *can't* tell anything that's true! I don't believe they're engaged any more'n I am!"



"THERE AIN'T NOTHIN' I LIKE BETTER 'N A CUP O' TEA."

"Well, now! For the land's sake! Be you a-tellin' me I'm lyin', Charlotte Frost?"

"Don't seem 'sif you could make anything else out of what I said!"

A silence as profound as that which dominated an uninhabited region followed this audacious statement. Charlotte's two listeners sat rigid with astonishment at her daring. Mrs. Frost's look of frightened amazement was tinctured with a certain admiration of her daughter's fearlessness, Mrs. Pease's with insulted dignity. For one dreadful moment she had been completely overcome at her wickedness in proclaiming as true that which had no other foundation than her own strong hope, but the sceptical sneer on the angry face before her, the tone of defiant accusation in the vibrant voice, aroused her naturally combative spirit to defence. "I've got to believe it's true now," she kept saying to herself. "It *is* true. I'm *sure* of it." Charlotte's eyes seemed to possess the quality of augers. Their pitiless scrutiny was almost unendurable. Mrs. Pease's inward perturbation was such that she scarcely knew what she was saying. She was simply conscious, in a dim, indeterminate way, that she must support the statement she had been led into making, however indefensible it might be.

"I had no idee it would touch you so deep, Charlotte," she remarked, feeling that she must say something to prevent herself from thinking. "If I had I wouldn't have thought of mentionin' it, even to your mar."

"Well, of all things!" screamed Charlotte. "I ain't said I cared a row o' pins about Steve Judkins, have I? I only said he'd give me as much encouragement to think he liked me as he ever did Ory. I don't want him, but I ain't goin' to turn him over to anybody without good reason, if I don't. So, now!"

"Prob'bly you'll have to make up your mind to it sooner or later," replied Mrs. Pease, whose faith in her own prediction was growing unaccountably. Charlotte's refuge in generalities had lightened her burden wonderfully, and her courage waxed valiant.

"You really give me a turn callin' me a liar," she added, reproachfully.

"You acted kinder strange, anyway," put in Mrs. Frost, who had not hitherto ventured to interpolate a remark since she had been so brusquely silenced by her daughter. "How long's it been since they fixed things up between 'em?"

The natural question aroused Mrs. Pease's sickening dread by reducing her to plain facts, for which she was unprepared.

"I ain't goin' to say another thing about it," said she, resolutely. "I hadn't ought to a spoke at all, but it can't be helped now. All I ask of you is to keep it close till I give you liberty to tell it round."

"Well, I s'pose we can promise that," said Mrs. Frost, reluctantly. "What do you say, Charlotte?"

The girl had seated herself on the top step, trembling with the reaction from the passion that had mastered her. She lifted a face no longer red, and a pair of eyes in which dwelt a curiously unsatisfied and puzzled expression. There was something incomprehensible to her about the matter still, and she wrapped her arms round her tall knees and hesitated before giving the desired assent. In the distance the roll of carriage wheels could be heard approaching rapidly. The pace was so much more rapid than was customary in that vicinity that the three women were conscious of a thrill of curiosity even in the midst of their personal excitement. Each turned her head in the direction from whence the noise came, and the carriage and its occupants burst simultaneously upon the vision of all.

"Massy sakes! There they be themselves!" said Mrs. Frost, rising and going close to the railing to see to better advantage. "How under the light of the sun do you s'pose they happened round this way? Hail 'em, Charlotte!" she added, authoritatively. "Tell Ory her mar's here."

Mrs. Pease gave an ineffectual clutch of desperation at Charlotte's sleeve as the girl flew past her. She could make no sound. The impending crisis had rendered her dumb.

"They can take you home as well as not," continued Mrs. Frost, turning to her visitor. "'Twould be a pity if they couldn't arter such a tramp as you've had. Land alive! Have you got a pain? You look real mizerble."

"It's a crick in my side," gasped Mrs. Pease. "Seemed 'sif I couldn't git my breath for a minute."

"Ploorisy," asserted her companion. "Put on a flaxseed poultice as soon as you git home. There ain't anything to equal 'em. There! They're drawin' up. Charlotte's stopped 'em!"

Mrs. Pease shivered visibly, but Mrs. Frost was too much interested in watching what was going on before her to notice it. "I can't make out what they're up to," she announced in a puzzled tone. "They ain't a-gittin' out, but they're talkin' at a great rate. Hadn't we better go down to the gate and speak to 'em?"

"I'd rather set still," said Mrs. Pease, in a faint voice.

"Well, if you don't mind bein' left, I'll run down. Think you'll be all right if I leave you a minute?"

"Yes."

As soon as the brown and white calico had fluttered over the last step Mrs. Pease raised herself in her chair, and gripping its wooden arms tightly looked toward the carriage, which was drawn up by the roadside near the gate. She could see that Steve and Ora were bending forward listening to Charlotte, who, leaning on the rail of the white fence, seemed to be talking with animation.

"She's a-tellin' 'em," groaned the poor woman, stung for the first time into a realization of the enormity of her offence. "What shall I do? Seems 'sif the very Old Boy got into me and driv me to tell that lie. It'll mortify Ory to death. She'll never git over it, either. Oh, what am I goin' to do?"

She was a sad spectacle as she sat there, her big body cowering in the roomy rocker, her face, framed in a large black bonnet much askew, white with anticipation of Ora's humilation and despair when Charlotte should have finished her startling revelation. "An' right before Steve, too!" she thought, with anguish.

"She must have hearn it all by this time," she thought presently. "Wonder what they'll say to me fust?"

"Mis' Pease!"

"Mis' *Pease!*"

"Mar-r-r!"

The voices breaking in upon her tormenting thoughts nearly forced a shriek from Mrs. Pease.

"I can't go, noway," she groaned. "I don't see how I can face 'em!"

"Mis' Pease, come along down, they're a-waitin' for you," called Charlotte's sharp voice, as she advanced a little way up the walk to make herself heard. She put her hands to the sides of her mouth, sailor fashion, and called again, "Hurry up, Mis' Pease. They're waitin' to drive you home."

"Drive me home!" Mrs. Pease rose in bewilderment. "Why—why—they can't be so dreadful put out, then." She adjusted her bonnet with hands that trembled so it was more one-sided than ever when she had arranged it. "I can't think what it means, unless Ory's too dazed, or too proud, to say a word before the Frosts. I'm thankful they ain't goin' to take me to task here! Don't seem 'sif I could stand that before Susan Frost an' that sassy Charlotte!" She tottered a few steps. "S'pose I've got to git down there someway, but my legs don't seem to have a mite of strength in 'em."

But Mrs. Pease had been too long accustomed to domineering over others to be wholly crushed by any kind of calamity. Appalled as she was at the difficulty into which she had gotten herself, her lifelong habit of self-reliance acted as a brace to her weakened nerves. With a praiseworthy assumption of that capableness which she felt that she had perhaps forfeited forever, she got down the steps, in spite of an uncertainty in regard to her extremities to which she had hitherto been a stranger. Her anxious eyes scanned the faces she was nearing with something so desperately imploring in their glance that Ora noticed it at once.

"Why, mar! Ain't you feelin' well? You hadn't ought to come out such a day. 'Twas too warm to walk so far."

"Dunno how you'd a-managed to get home if we hadn't happened to come by," said Steve, jocularly. There

"GIT RIGHT IN, MAR," SAID ORA. "WE'LL HAVE YOU HOME IN NO TIME."

was noticeable buoyancy in his hearty voice, unsuppressed happiness in his pleasant, rustic face. Mrs. Pease looked uncertainly from him to Ora, whose little brown face wore a blissful expression that her concern for her mother was powerless to subdue. Charlotte's felicitations had produced a most unexpected, most inexplicable effect. The attendant humiliation seemed to have been transferred to the unlooked-for side, for Mrs. Frost stood by the wheel with a disappointed countenance, and Charlotte was twisting her big hands together with an unsuccessful effort at lightness and indifference in her demeanor.

Mrs. Pease found speech quite beyond her. She took refuge in her accredited pain, and kept one hand pressed to her side.

"Git right in, mar," said Ora. "We'll have you home in no time."

"An' don't forgit that flaxseed poultice," urged Mrs. Frost, as she and Charlotte assisted their fleshy visitor into the buggy; Steve, while facetiously suggesting a derrick, having all he could do to hold in his frisky animal during the formidable operation.

"You sit on the seat, mar," said Ora, laughingly, "an' I'll git down in front."

"Wait a minute, an' I'll git you a cricket," suggested Mrs. Frost. "Run in, Charlotte, an' git the one that's at the foot of the lounge."

But Steve's horse was determined to wait no longer, and bounded forward with a jerky motion that momentarily straightened Mrs. Pease's remorse-bowed shoulders.

"What's that gal been sayin' to you?" she asked, with desperate determination to know the worst at once. Ora rested her head against her mother's knee, and cast a sidelong glance at Steve, who was not so deeply absorbed in his duties as to neglect to repay the coquettish little glance with a broad smile of very particular meaning.

"Just the thing to hit us off exact, though it beats me holler how she found it out," said he, laughing loudly. "She was just playin' a game on us, I s'pose, tryin' to find out if there was anything between me an' Ory. 'I want to congrat'late you,' she began, with more air than you could shake a stick at. Tell you, *Mother Pease*, it set her down pretty low when I said we'd be mighty glad to have her. She was too flustered to speak for a minute, an' then—Hello! Ory! Your mar don't seem to take it in yet!"

"What 's he mean, Ory Pease?" demanded her mother, grasping her daughter's shoulders and shaking her nervously. "What 's he mean? Speak up, Ory."

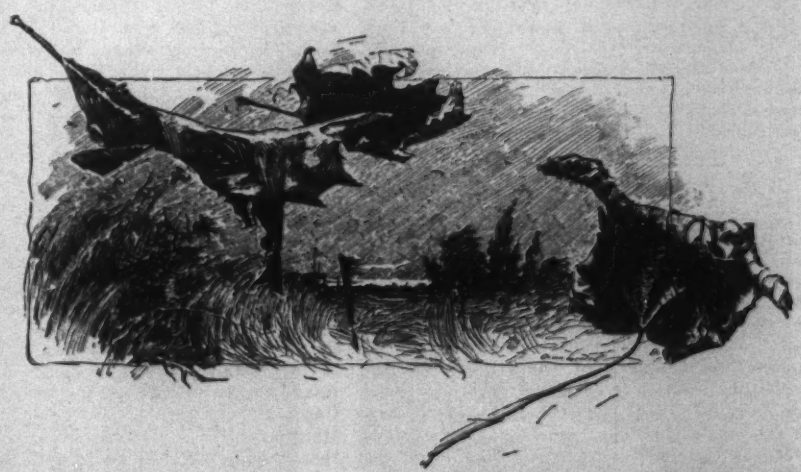
"He means we got engaged this arternoon," said Ora, coloring; but making the announcement with a youthful dignity that was most attractive.

Mrs. Pease sat bolt upright. She renounced her pleurisy, and drew the first comfortable breath she had inhaled since her arrival at the Frost cottage. Her face was even more jubilant than those turned toward her.

"Thank the Lord for all his massies!" she ejaculated, devoutly. Then, as a painful thought assailed her, she reached out suddenly, seized the reins from Steve's hands, and with one movement of her strong wrists pulled the restive horse to an abrupt stop.

"You ain't goin' a step further," she declared vehemently, "till you solemnly swear, both of you, never to let out to Charlotte Frost, or her mother, or anybody, *when* you settled it."

The odd demand had little significance for them, but they recognized that for some reason compliance with it was of moment to Mrs. Pease, and gave the promise with a sincerity that guaranteed absolute and enduring silence.



"HUMAN DOCUMENTS."

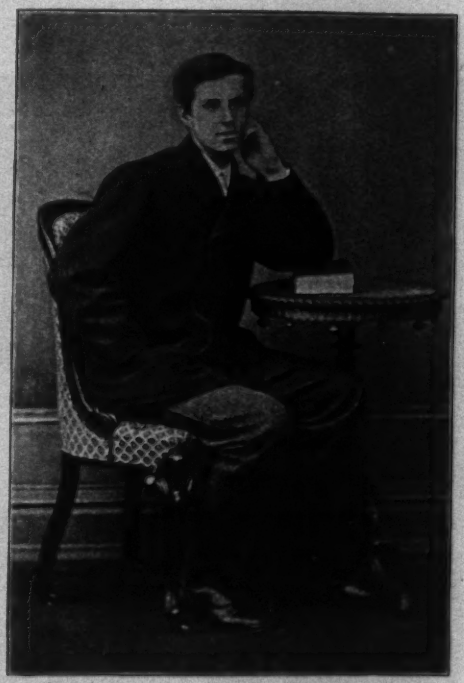
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

LORD ABERDEEN (John Campbell Hamilton Gordon) is the seventh earl of the name, Lord Aberdeen, his grandfather, being Prime Minister of England in 1854. He was born August 3, 1847, and succeeded to the title in 1870. On entering the House of Lords he was a Conservative, but eight years later he changed, and has ever since been a Liberal and an important dependence of Mr. Gladstone's. In 1886 Mr. Gladstone appointed him Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and intrusted to him the important mission of putting the Home Rule policy in force. He did his part so skilfully as to become immensely popular in Ireland. When Mr. Gladstone came again into office, he chose Lord Aberdeen for Governor-General of Canada, and that office he still holds. Like his wife, Lord Aberdeen is noted for his readiness with time and money in aiding charitable and reformatory projects. He gave $5,000 toward General Booth's plan of alleviating distress and wickedness in London. On their bridal tour he and Lady Aberdeen went to Egypt, and while there they took in charge five Egyptian lads, four of whom they found offered for sale by a slave merchant, and the fifth a fugitive from punishments inflicted upon him for becoming a Christian. The fact was indicative of what was to be the course and character of their whole married life. It has been a union in beneficence.

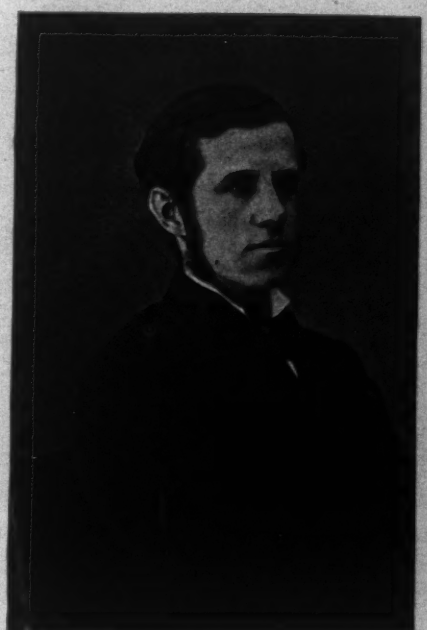
LADY ABERDEEN has come to be particularly well known in the United States through the Irish Village, with its reproduction of Blarney Castle, which she erected in the Midway Plaisance of the recent World's Fair. And it is a very fitting knowledge of her that is thus conveyed; for the Irish Village was intended to promote the interests of the Irish Industries Association, and in forwarding that and other public organizations Lady Aberdeen has proved herself one of the most generous and capable women of her time. She is the founder of the Onward and Upward Society, which, beginning among the poor people on Lord Aberdeen's estate in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, has extended until it now contains, in different parts of the world, about nine thousand members. In its interest Lady Aberdeen edits a monthly review called "Onward and Upward." She was also for a time president, and a very effective president too, of the Woman's Liberal Federation, an organization which plays an important part in English politics. Since going to Canada she has helped to organize there a National Council of Women, which is to serve as a sort of uniting bond for various religious, philanthropic, social, and political associations of women throughout the Dominion. She is a native of the Scottish Highlands, being the daughter of Dudley Coutts Marjoribanks, now Lord Tweedmouth, and was married to Lord Aberdeen in 1877.

CAPTAIN CHARLES KING, the best known and almost the only writer of novels dealing with American army life, comes of the famous King family which has the Revolutionary statesman Rufus King for its head. He is the son of a later Rufus, and was born in Albany, New York, October 12, 1844. He was educated at Columbia College, New York, and the Military Academy, West Point, graduating from the latter in June, 1866. He began service in the artillery, but was afterwards transferred to the cavalry. In fourteen years he went through the usual round of service, in the frontier and other departments, and then he resigned from active service, chiefly because of a wound he had received in 1874 at Sunset Pass, Arizona. It was not until after his retirement that he turned to literature; his first book, "The Colonel's Daughter," appearing in 1882. The retirement was influential, not only as furnishing the repose and leisure, but also, it should seem, as furnishing a special inducement, to write. Asked recently what guided him to literature, Captain King replied quite frankly: "Circumstances, chiefly. I wasn't long in finding out that keeping a family on retired captain's pay is a beggar's business. I had to go to work, so I took to writing." Besides his numerous army stories, he has published "Famous and Decisive Battles," 1884.

AGE 13. 1860. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY C. W. WILSON, ABERDEEN.

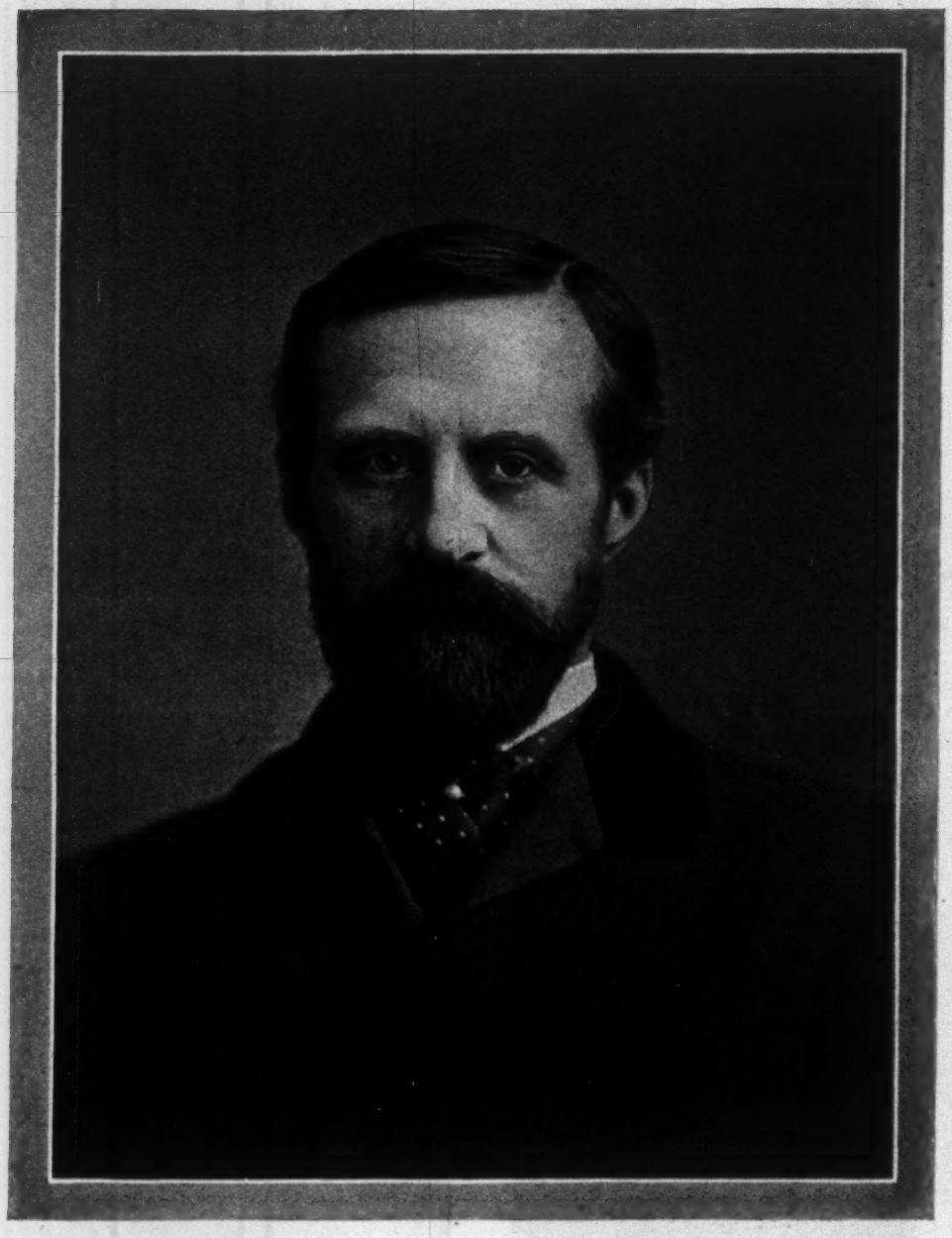


AGE 17. 1864. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY A. ADAMS, ABERDEEN.



AGE 26. 1873. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BARRAUD & JERRARD, LONDON.

AGE 35. 1882. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY TOPLEY OTTAWA.



AGE 45. 1893. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBINSON, DUBLIN.

AGE 3. 1860.

AGE 6. 1863.

AGE 18. 1875.

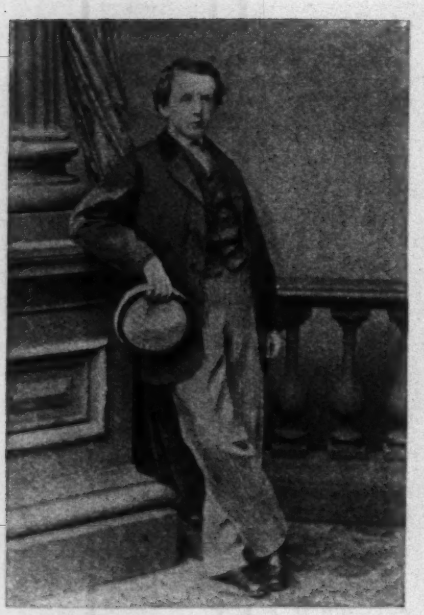
AGE 20. 1877.

AGE 25. 1882. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLIOTT & FRY, LONDON.

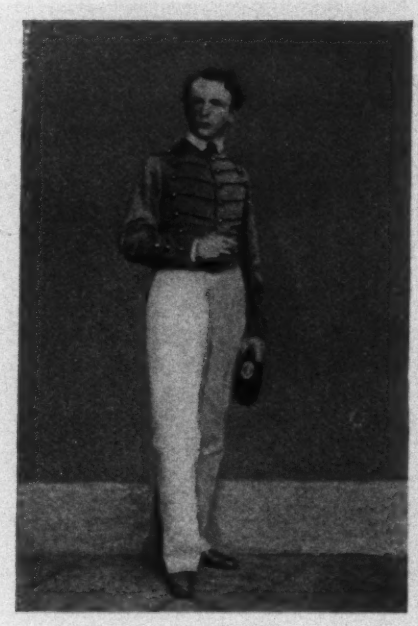
AGE 28. 1885. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY H. S. MENDELSSOHN, LONDON.

AGE 29. 1886. LADY ABERDEEN IN IRISH COSTUME. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LAFAYETTE, DUBLIN.

AGE 36. 1893. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANCELLOR, DUBLIN.



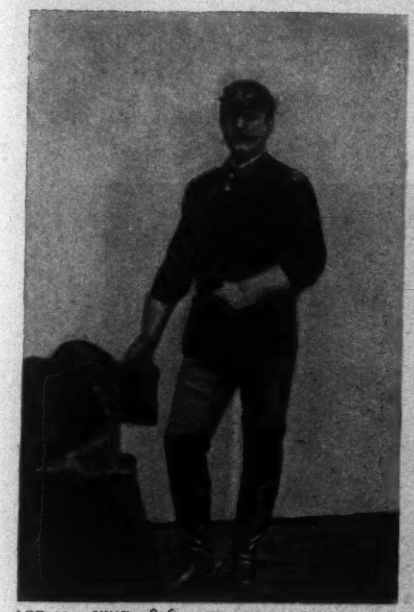
AGE 14. 1859. WHILE A STUDENT IN COLUMBIA COLLEGE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, NEW YORK.



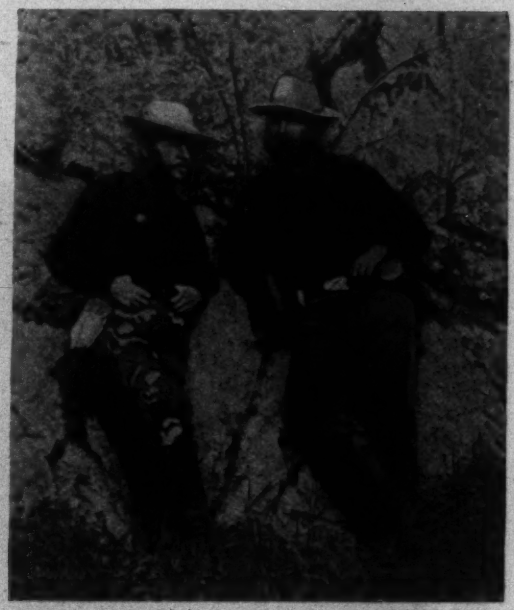
AGE 17. JULY, 1862. WHILE A WEST POINT "PLEBE."

AGE 20. JULY, 1865. AS ADJUTANT, CORPS OF CADETS, WEST POINT.

AGE 25. JULY, 1870. 1ST LIEUT. 1ST ARTILLERY AND ASS'T INSTRUCTOR IN TACTICS, WEST POINT.

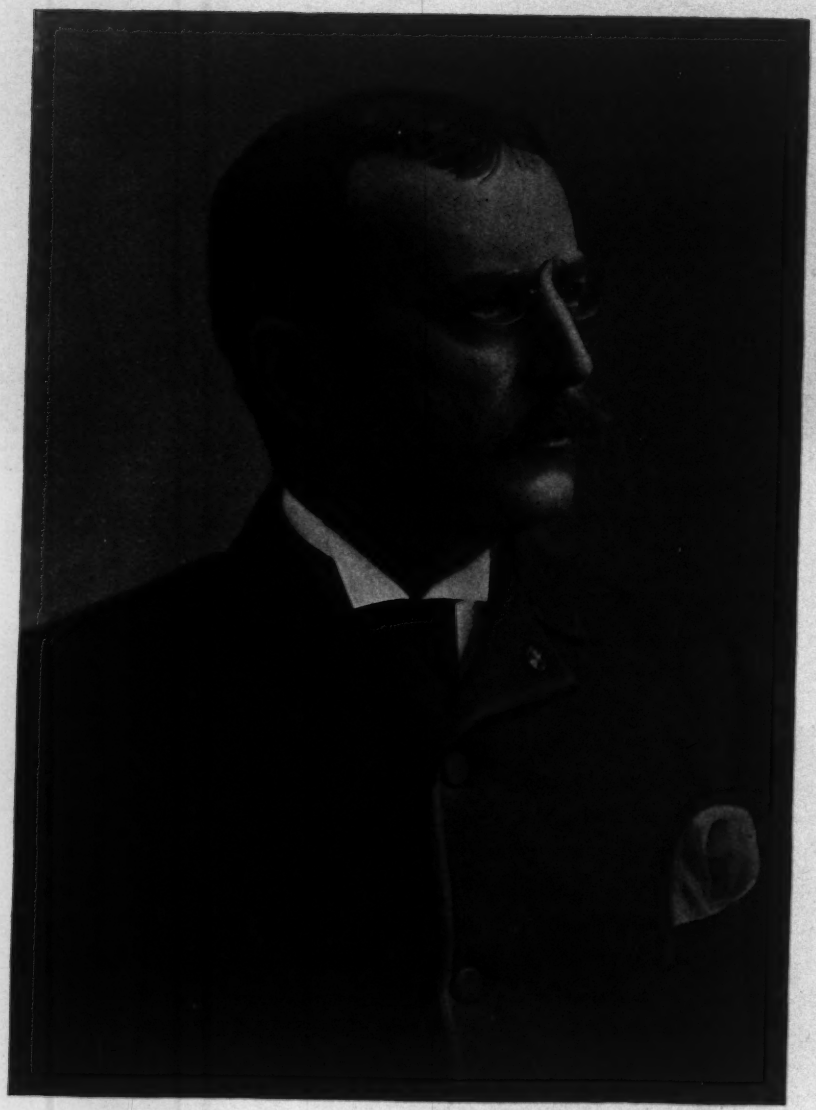


AGE 31. JUNE, 1876. 1ST LIEUT. 5TH CAVALRY.



AGE 32. OCTOBER, 1876. IN COMPANY WITH MAJ. J. W. MASON, IN THE BLACK HILLS, AT THE CLOSE OF THE SIOUX CAMPAIGN.

AGE 42. JULY, 1887. CAPTAIN, U.S.A.



CAPTAIN KING AT THE PRESENT DAY.

ALPHONSE DAUDET AT HOME.

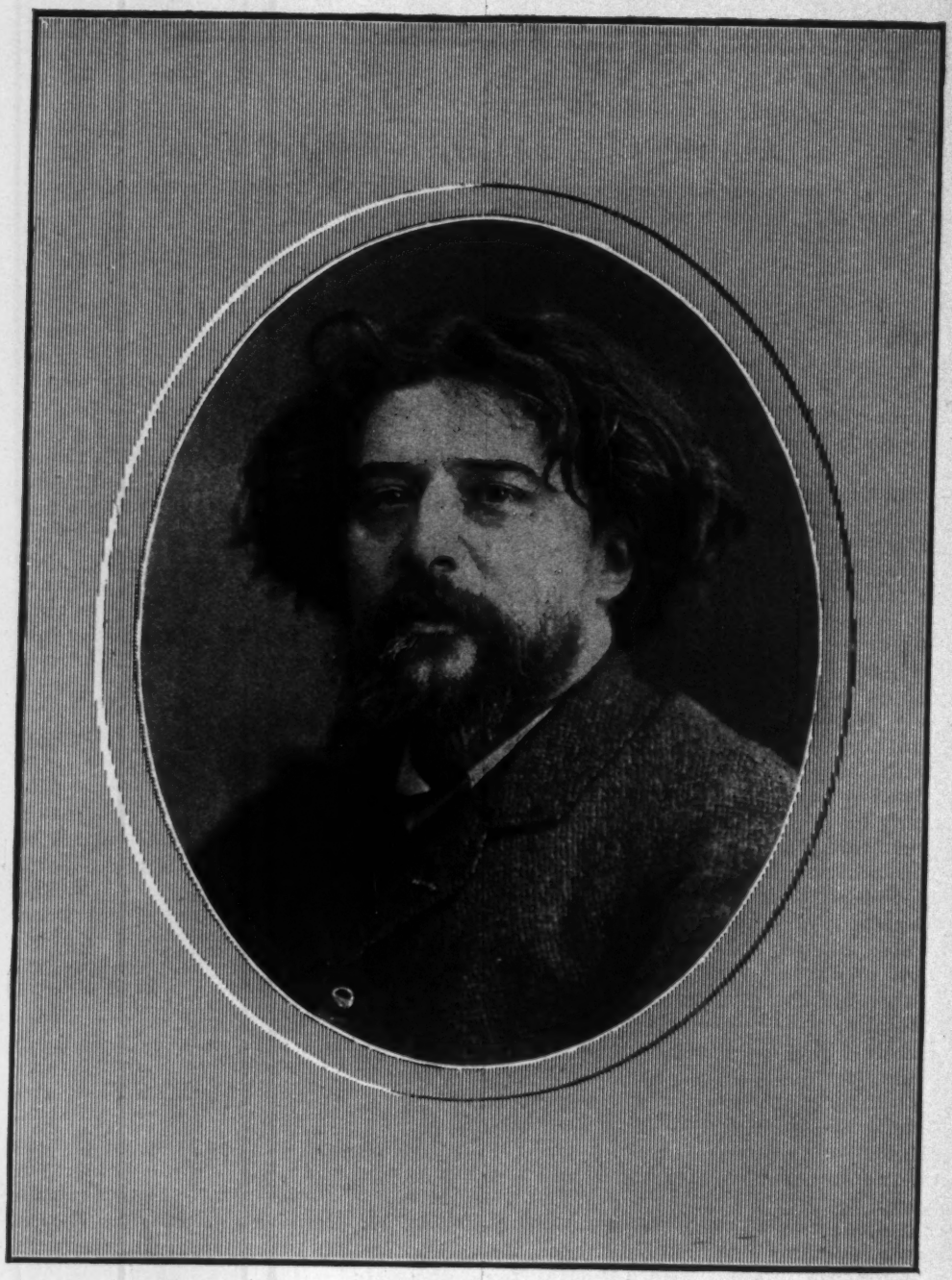
HIS OWN ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND WORK.

REPORTED BY R. H. SHERARD.

THOUGH now grown wealthy, and one of the first personages in Parisian society, being the most welcome guest in such exclusive drawing-rooms as that of the Princess Mathilde, the simple and good-hearted Alphonse Daudet is the most accessible man in Paris. I don't believe that any one is ever turned away from his door.

He lives in the fashionable Faubourg St. Germain quarter, on the fourth floor of a house in the Ruede Bellechasse which is reputed to possess the most elegant staircase of any apartment house in Paris. His apartment is simply furnished, and is in great contrast to that of Zola or of Dumas. Still there are not wanting for its decoration objects of art, and especially may be mentioned some fine old oak furniture. To the right of the table on which he writes is a Normandy farmhouse cupboard of carved oak, which is a treasure in itself. The table, like that of many other successful men of letters in Paris, is a very large and highly ornamental one, reminding one of an altar; while the chair which is set against it, though less throne-like than that of Emile Zola, is stately and decorative. Daudet's study is the most comfortable room in the house. The three windows look out on a pleasant garden, and, as they face the south, the sun streams through the red-embroidered lace curtains nearly all the day. The doors are draped with Oriental portières; a heavy carpet covers the floor, and the furniture, apart from the work-table and chair, is for comfort and not for show. Daudet's favorite place, when not writing, is on a little sofa which stands by the fireplace. When the master is seated here, his back is to the light. His visitor sits opposite to him on another couch, and between them is a small round table, on which may usually be seen the latest book of the day, and—for Daudet is a great smoker—cigars and cigarettes. There are few pictures in the room, but there is a fine portrait of Flaubert to be noticed, whilst over the bookshelf which lines the wall behind the writing-table is a portrait of the lady to whom Daudet confesses that he owes all the success as well as all the happiness of his life, the portrait of Madame Daudet.

Nothing can be more charming than the welcome which the master of the house extends to even the stranger who calls upon him for the first time. The free-masonry of letters or of Bohemia is nowhere in Paris so graciously encouraged as here. His intimates he calls "my sons," and it is this term that he applies also to his secretary and confidant, the excellent M. Hebner. His good humor and unvarying kindness to one and all are the more admirable, that, always a nervous sufferer, he has of late years been almost a confirmed invalid. He cannot move about the room but with the help of his stick; he has many nights when, racked with pain, he is unable to sleep; and it is consequently with surprise that those who know him see that he never lets an impatient word or gesture escape him, even under circumstances when one or the other would be perfectly justifiable. The consequence is, that Daudet has not a single enemy in the world. There are many who do not admire his work; but none who do not love the man for his sweetness, just as all are fascinated with his brilliant wit. It is one of the rarest of intellectual treats to hear Daudet talk as he talks



ALPHONSE DAUDET.

at his table, or at his wife's "at-homes" on Wednesday evenings, or on Sunday mornings, when from ten to twelve he receives his literary friends. He has a very free way of speech, and when alone with men uses whatever expressions best suit his purpose; but every sentence is an epigram or an anecdote, a souvenir or a criticism. It is a sight that one must remember who has seen Alphonse Daudet sitting at his table, or on the couch by the fire-side, in an attitude which always betrays how ill at ease he is, and yet showing himself superior to this, and with eyes fixed, rarely on the person whom he is addressing, but on something, pen or cigarette, which he turns and turns in his nervous fingers, conversing on whatever may be the topic of the day. He takes a keen interest in politics, and, indeed, seems to prefer to speak on these rather than on any other topic except literature.

HARDSHIPS OF CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

When, the other day, I asked him to tell me of his life, he said, speaking of his early youth, "I have often tried to collect the memories of my childhood, to write them out in Provençal, the language of my native land; but my youth was such a sad one that these are all resumed in the title of a book of my *souvenirs de jeunesse*, 'Mi Poou,' which means, in Provençal, 'My Fears.' Yes, fears and tears; that is what my youth consisted of. I was born at Nîmes, where my father was a small tradesman. My youth at home was a lamentable one. I have no recollection of home which is not a sorrowful one, a recollection of tears. The baker who refuses bread; the servant whose wages could not be paid, and who declares that she will stay on without wages, and becomes familiar in consequence, and says 'thou' to her master; the mother always in tears; the father always scolding. My country is a country of monuments. I played at marbles in the ruins of the temple of Diana, and raced with my little comrades in the devastated Roman arena. It is a beautiful country, however, and I am proud of my relation to it. My name seems to indicate that I descend from the Moorish settlers of Provence; for, as you know, the Provençal people is largely of Moorish extraction. Indeed, it is from that circumstance that I have drawn much of the humor of my books, such as 'Tartarin.' It is funny, you know, to hear of men with bushy black hair and flaring eyes, like bandits and wild warriors, who are, the one a peaceful baker, the other the least offensive of apothecaries. I myself have the Moorish type, and my name Daudet, according to the version which I like best, is the Moorish for David. Half my family is called David. Others say that Daudet means 'Deodat,' which is a very common name in Provence, and which, derived from *Deo datus*, means 'Given by God.'

"I know little of my predecessors, except that in 1720 there was a Chevalier Daudet, who wrote poetry and had a decade of celebrity in the South. But my brother Ernest, who used to be ambitious, in his book 'Mon Frère et Moi,' has tried to trace our genealogy from a noble famliy. Whatever we were at one time, we had come very low down in the world when I came into existence, and my childhood was as miserable a one as can be fancied. I have to some extent related its unhappiness in my book 'Le Petit Chose.' Oh! and apropos of 'Le Petit Chose,'

let me declare, on my word of honor, that I had never read a line of Dickens when I wrote that book. People have said that I was inspired by Dickens, but that is not true. It was an English friend of mine, whom I had at Nîmes, a boy called Benasset, who first told me that I was very like Dickens in personal appearance. Perhaps that is the reason why people trace a resemblance in our work also.

"My most vivid recollection of youth is the terrible fear that I had of the mad dog. I was brought up at nurse in a village called Fons, which must have been called so because there was no fountain, and indeed no water, within eight miles. It was the most arid of places, and doubtless this was to some extent the reason why there were so many mad dogs in the district. I remember that the washerwomen of the village used to take train to the Rhone to wash their linen, and that, when they returned in the evenings, all the people of the village used to line the road, as they passed with their wet clothes, to get a whiff of cool air and the scent of the water. Perhaps it was because there was no water anywhere that, when I was a child, I so longed for the sea; and that, when I did not wish to be a poet, I prayed that I might become a sailor. But to tell you of the mad dogs that haunted my earliest days. My foster-father was an innkeeper. His name was Garrimon, which is Provençal for 'Mountain Rat.' Is not that a splendid name, Garrimon? Why have I never used it in any of my books? Well, Garrimon's tavern was the rendezvous of the village. The café was on the first floor, and I can remember how, at nightfall, the black-bearded, dark-eyed men of the village, armed to the teeth, one with a sword, another with a gun, and most with scythes, used to come in from all parts of the district, talking of nothing but of the *Chin Foü*, the mad dog, that was scouring the land, and against whom they had armed themselves. Then I ran to Néno, my foster-mother, and clung to her skirts, and lay awake at nights, trembling, as I thought of the *Chin Foü* and of the terrible weapons that the men carried because they, strong, black-bearded men, were as frightened at him as the quaking little wretch who started at every sound that the wind made in the eaves of the old house. Where I lay in bed, I could hear rough voices, as they sat round the inn-tables, drinking lemonade—for the Provençal is so excitable by nature that mere lemonade acts upon him like strong drink—and it was the *Chin Foü*, and nothing but the *Chin Foü*, which they talked about. But what brought my horror to a climax, and left an ineffaceable impression on me, was, that one day I nearly met the mad dog. It was a summer evening, I remember, and I was walking home, carrying a little basket, along a path white with dust, through thick vines. Suddenly I heard wild cries, '*Aou Chin Foü! Aou Chin Foü!*' Then came a discharge of guns. Mad with terror I jumped into the vines, rolling head over ears; and, as I lay there, unable to stir a finger, I heard the dog go by as if a hurricane were passing; heard his fierce breath, and the thunder of the stones that in his mad course he rolled before him; and my heart stopped beating, in a paroxysm of terror which is the strongest emotion that I have ever felt in all my life. Since then I have an absolute horror of dogs, and, by extension, indeed, of all animals. People have reproached me for this, and say that a poet cannot dislike animals. I can't help it. I hate them all. I think that they are what is ugly and vile in nature. They are caricatures of all that is most loathsome and base in man; they are the latrines of humanity. And, curiously enough, all my children have inherited this same horror for dogs.

"I remember that at nineteen, when I was down in the valley of Chevreuse, not far from Madame Adam's place at Gif, the recollection of that afternoon came upon me so strongly, that, borrowing Victor Hugo's title, I wrote the 'Forty Days of a Condemned Man,' in which I essayed to depict, day by day, the sensations of a man who has been bitten by a mad dog. This work made me ill, a neuropath. Before I had finished writing it, I had grown to be-

lieve that I had indeed been bitten, and the result was, that my horror and dread were confirmed. The sight of a dog is to-day still enough to distress me exceedingly. This phenomenon makes me think, what I have noticed before and repeatedly, that, comparing man to a book, he is set up in type at a very early age, and, in after life, it is only new editions of him that are printed; by which I mean, that a man's character and habits are crystallized whilst he is still a very young man, and in after life he only goes through the same phases of emotion over and over again.

"Other memories of my youth? Well, the Homeric battles that we children of the town used to have. Nîmes is divided into Huguenots and Roman Catholics, and each party hated the other as keenly as they did in France on the day of Saint Bartholomew, which dawned on that sanguinary eve. The feud was as keen between the children of the town, and many were

DAUDET AND HIS ELDEST SON, LEON, IN DAUDET'S STUDY. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN ESPECIALLY FOR "McCLURE'S MAGAZINE."

the battles with stones that we fought in the streets. I have on my forehead to this day the cicatrice of a wound which I received from a Huguenot stone in one of those fights. I have described these fights in 'Numa Roumestan;' and here let me tell you that Numa Roumestan is Alphonse Daudet. It was said that he was Gambetta. Nothing of the sort. Numa Roumestan is Alphonse Daudet, with all his foibles and what strength he may have.

"My father had seventeen children, but only three lived to grow up: Ernest, a sister who married the brother of my wife, and myself. I knew only one of the others, being myself one of the younger. That was my brother Henri. I shall never forget the day when the news of his death reached home. It came by telegram: 'He is dead. Pray God for him.' My father rose from the table, and cried, 'He is dead! He is dead! He is dead!' His gesture, his intonation, which had something of ancient tragedy about it, impressed me profoundly, and I remember that all that night I lay awake, trying to imitate my father's voice, to find the tragic ring of his voice, repeating 'He is dead! He is dead!' over and over again until I found it.

MADAME DAUDET AND HER DAUGHTER.

"I have told you that I longed for the sea. How I devoured the first novels that I read, 'Midshipman Easy,' by Marryat, 'Robinson Crusoe,' and 'The Pilot'! How I used to dream of all that water, and of the cold winds blowing across the brine! I dare say it was from this love of the water that I felt quite happy when I was sent to Lyons to school, because there I saw water and boats, and it was in some way a realization of my longings. I was ten when I was sent to school, and I remained at school until I was fifteen and a half. I delighted in Latin, and became a good Latin scholar, so that I was afterwards able to help my son Léon in his studies, going over all his books with him. I loved Tacitus; disliked Cicero. Tacitus has had a great influence on French literature since Chateaubriand. What I best remember of my school-days is the handwriting of every one of my little comrades. Often, in my nights of fever, lying awake, I have seen, as in hieroglyphs upon a huge wall, the writings of all those boys, and have passed hours, as it seemed, in attributing to its author each varied piece of penmanship. I made only one friend, whose name was Garrison, a man of the most extraordinary inconsequentiality. He called on me not long ago, for the first time since we parted at school, and I then heard that, though he had been in Paris almost as long as I had, he had never ventured to come near me. He told me, after much hesitation, that he was a manufacturer of dolls' boots, in a street near La Roquette; but that business was bad, and he wanted me to help him to do something else. I also learned that he had a son, who, he told me, was a comic actor at the Beaumarchais theatre.

"It was on leaving the Lycée at Lyons that I entered upon what was the worst year of my life. It was only during that horrible period that I ever thought of suicide. But I had not the courage to finish with existence. It requires a great deal of courage to be a suicide. From the age of fifteen and a half to the age of sixteen and a half

I was an usher in a school at Alais. The children at the school were very cruel to me. They laughed at me for my short-sightedness. They played impish tricks upon me because I was short-sighted. Yet I tried to conciliate them. I remember that I used to tell them stories, which I made up as I went along. The misery that I afterwards suffered in Paris was nothing compared to that year. I was free in Paris. There I was a slave, a butt. How horrible it was, and I was so sensitive a lad! I have told of this in the preface to 'Petit Chose,' which, by the way, I wrote too early. There was a child to whom I had been especially attentive, and who had promised me that he would take me to his parents' house during the vacation. I was so pleased, and did so look forward to this treat! Well, on the day of the prizes, in the distribution of which my young friend had received quite a number, which he owed to my coaching, he led me up to his parents, who were standing, waiting for him, by a grand landau, and said: 'Papa, mamma, here is M. Daudet, who has been so good to me, and to whom I owe all these books.' Well, papa and mamma, stout bourgeois people in Sunday clothes, simply turned their backs on me, and drove off with my young pupil, without a single word. And I had so looked forward to a holiday in the country with the lad, whom I loved sincerely. I could not stand the life more than a year, and at the age of seventeen went to Paris, without prospects of any kind, determined to starve rather than to continue a life of suffering drudgery. My brother Ernest was in Paris at the time as secretary to an old gentleman, and he gave me a shelter. I had two francs in my pocket when I arrived in Paris, and I had to share my brother's bed. I brought some rubbishy manuscripts with me, poetry, chiefly of a religious character.

DAUDET'S SECOND SON.

LITERARY LIFE IN PARIS.

"My first poem, indeed the first thing of mine that was printed, was published in the 'Gazette de Lyon,' in 1855. I was at that time fifteen years old. It was not long after my arrival in Paris that I was left entirely to my own resources; for my brother, losing his place as secretary, was forced to leave the capital, going into the country to edit a provincial paper. I then entered upon a period of the blackest misery, of the most doleful Bohemianism. I have suffered in the way of privation all that a man could suffer. I have known days without bread; I have spent days in bed because I had no boots to go out in. I have had boots which made a squashy sound each step that I took. But what made me suffer most was, that I had often to wear dirty linen, because I could not pay a washerwoman. Often I had to fail to keep appointments given me by the fair—I was a handsome lad and liked by ladies—because I was too dirty and shabby to go. I spent three years of my life in this way—from the age of eighteen, when my brother left Paris, to twenty-one.

"At that moment Duc de Morny offered me employment. His offer came to me in the midst of horror, shame, and distress. He had heard of me in this way: Some time before, I had published my first book of poems, a small volume of eighty pages, entitled 'Les Amoureuses.' This book

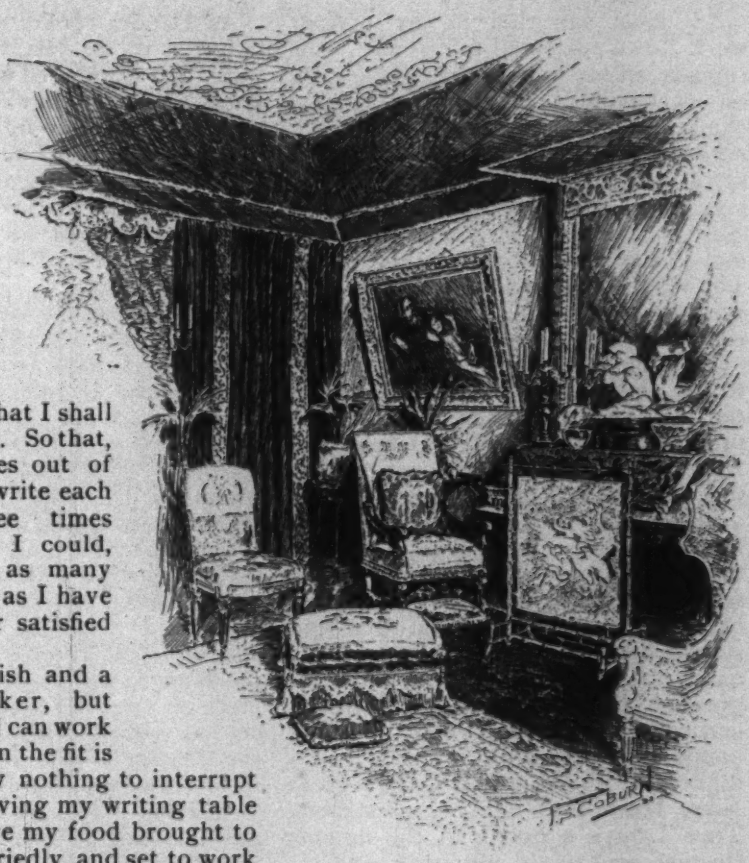
made my fortune. De Morny had heard the brothers Lyonnet reciting one of my poems out of this book, a poem called 'Les Prunes,' at the empress's, and I believe the empress asked him to make some inquiries about the poet. He sent to ask me what I needed to live on, and, accepting his patronage, I entered his service as *attaché de cabinet*. I passed at once from the most dingy Bohemianism to a butterfly life, learning all that there is of pleasure and luxury in existence. But somehow the legend of my Bohemianism clung to me, as it has clung to me all my life. Some people could never take me *au sérieux*. I remember that I once dined with the Duc Decazes for the purpose of one of my novels. I had written to tell him that I wanted to make use of his experiences, and he had asked me to dinner. Well, during the whole meal he related anecdotes of his career; but, thinking that he had to deal with a Bohemian, he arranged his anecdotes, as he thought, to interest me most. Thus he always began each story with 'I was taking a bock.' I suppose he thought that my idea of life was of beer-drinking in a café. At last I said: 'Your Excellency seems to be very fond of beer,' and afterwards added: 'It is a drink that I have never been able to support.' He seemed to understand what I meant, and changed his tone. But just as I left him—it was at two o'clock in the morning, and the lackeys, I remember, were all half dead with fatigue—he said: 'And now let us go and lay traps for Bismarck.' I went away thinking what an ass the man was to think that I should believe that he was going to do anything but go up-stairs to his wife; and he, no doubt, went up-stairs to his wife thinking what an ass I must be to believe what he had said. From the age of twenty-one I had only happiness. I may say that I was too happy. I am paying for it now. I believe that people always have to pay for what they have done and what they have enjoyed, and that therein lie justice and compensation for all, even on earth. Everybody's account is settled in this life. Of that I am sure.

"As to my success: About, writing for the 'Athenæum,' came to see me in 1872, to ask me what I was earning. He was writing something about the incomes of various men of letters, and, making up my accounts, I found that the amount of my average earnings at that time from literature was five thousand francs a year. Two years later, that is to say in 1874, I published 'Froment jeune et Risler ainé,' which brought me a great reputation, and greatly increased my income. Since 1878 I never made less than a hundred thousand francs a year, including my plays and novels. The book which gave me the most trouble was 'L'Evangéliste,' because my turn of mind is not in the least religious. It was 'L'Evangéliste,' also, that provoked the bitterest criticism, a book which made me numerous enemies. After its publication I was flooded with anonymous letters, some of the most offensive character. I remember receiving one which was so abominable that I took it to Pailleron to show it to him, and all who saw it said that it was the worst thing of its kind that they had ever seen.

HABITS OF WORK.

"My way of working is irregularity itself. Sometimes I work for eighteen hours a day, and day after day. At other times I pass months without touching a pen. I write very slowly, and revise and revise. I am never satisfied with my work. My novels I always write myself. I never could dictate a novel. As to my plays, I used formerly to dictate them. That was when I could walk. I had a certain talent in my legs. Since my illness I have had to abandon that mode of work, and I regret it. I am an improvisator, and in this respect differ from Zola. I am now writing a novel about youth, called 'Soutien de Famille,' and these note-books of mine will show you my way of work. This is the first book. It contains, as you see, nothing but notes and suggestions. The passages which are scratched out with red or blue pencil are passages of which I have already made use. This

is the second stage. You see only one page is written upon, the opposite one being left blank. Opposite each first composition I write the amended copy. The page on the right is the improved copy of the page on the left. After that I shall rewrite the whole. So that, leaving the notes out of consideration, I write each manuscript three times running, and, if I could, would write it as many times more ; for, as I have said, I am never satisfied with my work.



A CORNER IN M. DAUDET'S DRAWING-ROOM.

"I am a feverish and a spasmodic worker, but when in the mood can work very hard. When the fit is upon me, I allow nothing to interrupt me, not even leaving my writing table for meals. I have my food brought to my desk, eat hurriedly, and set to work before digestion begins. Thus I anticipate the drowsiness that digestion always brings with it, and escape its consequences. Now that I am ill, however, I do not often have those periods of splendid energy. I can produce only very slowly, and I feel quite nervous about 'Soutien de Famille' when I think that it is already expected by the public and announced by the publishers. As to my literary creed, it is one of absolute independence for the writer. I have always rebelled against the three classic traditions of French literature ; that is to say, the French Academy, the Théâtre Français, and the 'Revue des Deux Mondes.' I consider the Academy a collection of mediocrities, and would hold myself dishonored to be one of them.

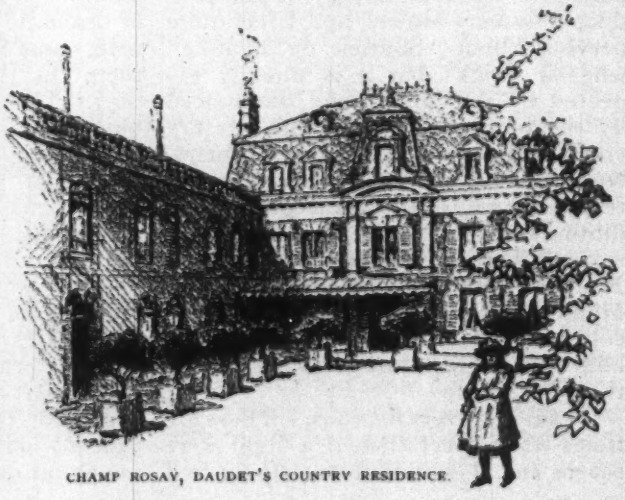
"I am very, very nervous. There are times when I feel that, if a light were set to me, I should blaze up in red flame. Sometimes this nervousness of mine plays me bad tricks. I remember that it cost me a large sum of money one morning recently. A kind of dramatic agent, accompanied by his wife, came to see me, to ask me to sell them the rights of translation of my play, 'Lutte Pour la Vie;' and they bothered and irritated me so, that, in order to get rid of them, I sold them this right for four thousand francs. The woman told me how handsome I was, and said that the ladies must have been very fond of me when I was a young man. She had a hat with feathers in it, and was altogether a most extraordinary person. An hour later I heard that these people had sold a part of the right I had ceded to them, for thirty thousand francs ; so that my nervousness that morning cost me about one thousand pounds.

"I must say that in my literary work I owe nearly all to my wife. She rereads all my books, and advises me on every point. She is all that is most charming, and has a wonderful mind, entirely opposed to mine, a synthetic spirit. I married at the age of twenty-six, and, strangely enough, I had always vowed that I never would marry a woman with literary tastes. The very first time that I met my wife was at a party at Ville d'Avray, where she recited a piece of poetry called 'Le Tremble.' She was dressed in white, and her appearance, as well as the way she declaimed those verses, produced an immense effect upon me. As we were leaving the house, my sister, who was with me, and who knew my aversion for women who dabble in literature, said to me, 'Well, Alphonse, that is not your style, is it?' I confessed, stammeringly, that I had no other hope then than that that girl should become my wife. I was fortunate enough to win her, and it was the greatest blessing that has been accorded to me in the course of a most happy and successful life. She is very different from me, practical and logical. Now, I am thoroughly superstitious. Thus I have a horror of the number thirteen, and would not walk under a ladder, or travel on a Friday, for any consideration. Our two characters are entirely opposed, and so are our ways of thinking. That is perhaps why we are such excellent friends.

"I have been very happy. There is my son Léon. I think that in him, Maurice Barrés, and in some other young men, lies the future of French literature. And then my other children. There is my little daughter Edmée, the godchild of De Goncourt. What can make a man happier than to have a ray of sunlight, like my little Edmée, charming, dainty, little six-year-old Parisienne that she is, about the house? There is a life of happiness in her presence alone."

As Daudet spoke, little Edmée ran into the room, just returned from a walk, and clambered upon the master's knees, and kissed him again and again; and it was a pretty sight to see the two. Daudet had some chocolate cigarettes in a drawer, and gave them to his daughter; and she said, "I shall die of happiness," when he gave them. It was emotional and Provençal, but sincere and pretty.

"The part of my success," continued Daudet, "which gave me the least pleasure, perhaps, was my advancement in the Legion of Honor to the degree of officer. I remember well, it was seven years ago, and I was in a box at the Théâtre Français, watching Mounet-Sully playing the part of Hamlet; and just when the curtain fell on the first act, and I had risen, saying, 'I must go and embrace Mounet; he has been sublime,' I felt myself plucked by the sleeve, and looking around saw Floquet. He seemed much excited, and said, 'I have a good piece of news for you, Daudet. It is settled. Your nomination as officer of the Legion of Honor will appear in to-morrow's Gazette.' And I said, 'Oh, I can't stop to talk about that now! I must go and kiss Mounet, who has been magnificent.' And I remember reading in Floquet's eyes that he didn't believe that my indifference was sincere. These people who decorate us against our will—I am sure that I never solicited or asked for any such



CHAMP ROSAY, DAUDET'S COUNTRY RESIDENCE.

honor; and if I did not refuse it, it was only because it is priggish to refuse, because it gets you talked about—these people, I say, are all people who themselves are not decorated; who seem to despise the reward which they dangle before our eyes, saying, 'If you are good boys and write properly, you shall have this pretty cross.' They treat us like children, despising themselves what they hold out to us as such a great inducement. Floquet wouldn't believe that I didn't care a snap of the fingers for his cross, and that all I wanted was to get away behind the scenes to compliment Mounet on his performance. When I saw the news officially announced next day, I felt sorry because I had received this distinction above the head of De Goncourt; and I feared lest De Goncourt, for whom I have the greatest reverence, would feel hurt at my having been preferred.

"Speaking of actors and of theatres, it may be of interest to relate that I never am present at any of the first productions of my plays. I am much too nervous, and always go away as far from the theatre as I can contrive, when a play of mine is being produced for the first time. It is only on the following morning that I learn whether it has been a success or not, and this generally from the manner of my *concierge*. If it has been a success, she is most respectful. If the papers have told her that her lodger has scored a failure, there is pity blended with contempt in the way in which she hands me my letters. It is an amusing insight into human character that is afforded to a dramatic writer by the conduct of his friends and of acquaintances on the morrow of a failure. Some pretend not to see him, not knowing what to say. Others come and try to console him, literally try to rub in lotion on the wounded heart. The servants grow familiar, and it is when your porter asks you for a box, or a pair of stalls in the dress circle, that you know that your work is definitely condemned. But I have been so fortunate in life—I am paying for it now—that I have very rarely had these experiences."

MADAME DAUDET IN THE FLOWER GARDEN AT CHAMP ROSAY.

HIS RETIRED LIFE.

Speaking of his friends, Daudet said that since his illness he has rarely gone out. He is a frequent visitor to the house of the Princess Mathilde, and rarely a week passes without his visiting De Goncourt, for whom he has the greatest affection. But the most part of his time is spent at home. On Sunday mornings his friends call on him, and often as many as twenty people are sitting round his chair, listening to

DAUDET ON THE BANKS OF THE SEINE AT CHAMP ROSAY.

his talk. He has been particularly spirited on the abominable scandals that have been disgusting France of late, and those who heard it will not easily forget the diatribe which he pronounced against Soinoury for his treatment of Madame Cottu. "I can see him," cried Daudet, "this police official, full of his own importance, with his stupid disdain of women, proceeding from his ignorance of anything like a real woman, stroking his whiskers, and saying, 'I'll soon get the little woman to say all that she knows.'

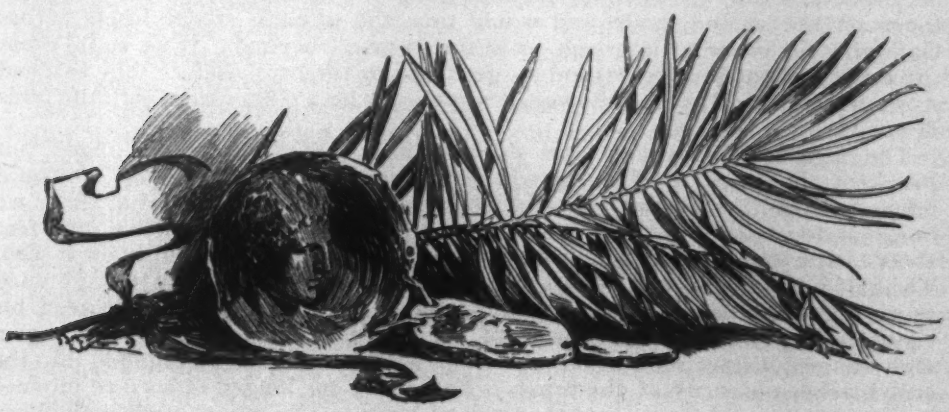
"If the people haven't revolted," he said, "and if there has been no revolution caused by abominations which only a few years ago would have caused barricades to rise in every street of Paris, it is because, as I have noticed, a complete transformation has been effected in the character of the French people, during the last ten or fifteen years, by the militarism to which the country has been subjected since the enforcement of the new army laws. The fear of the corporal is upon every Frenchman, and it is discipline that keeps quiet the men who, fifteen years ago, would have protested at the point of the bayonet against the abominable scoundrels who are plundering France."

Daudet, it may be remarked, says what he has to say without fear or reticence. The other day, in some *salon*, he was sitting next to an advocate-general who began a panegyric on a certain procureur-general, at that time the most powerful man in France.

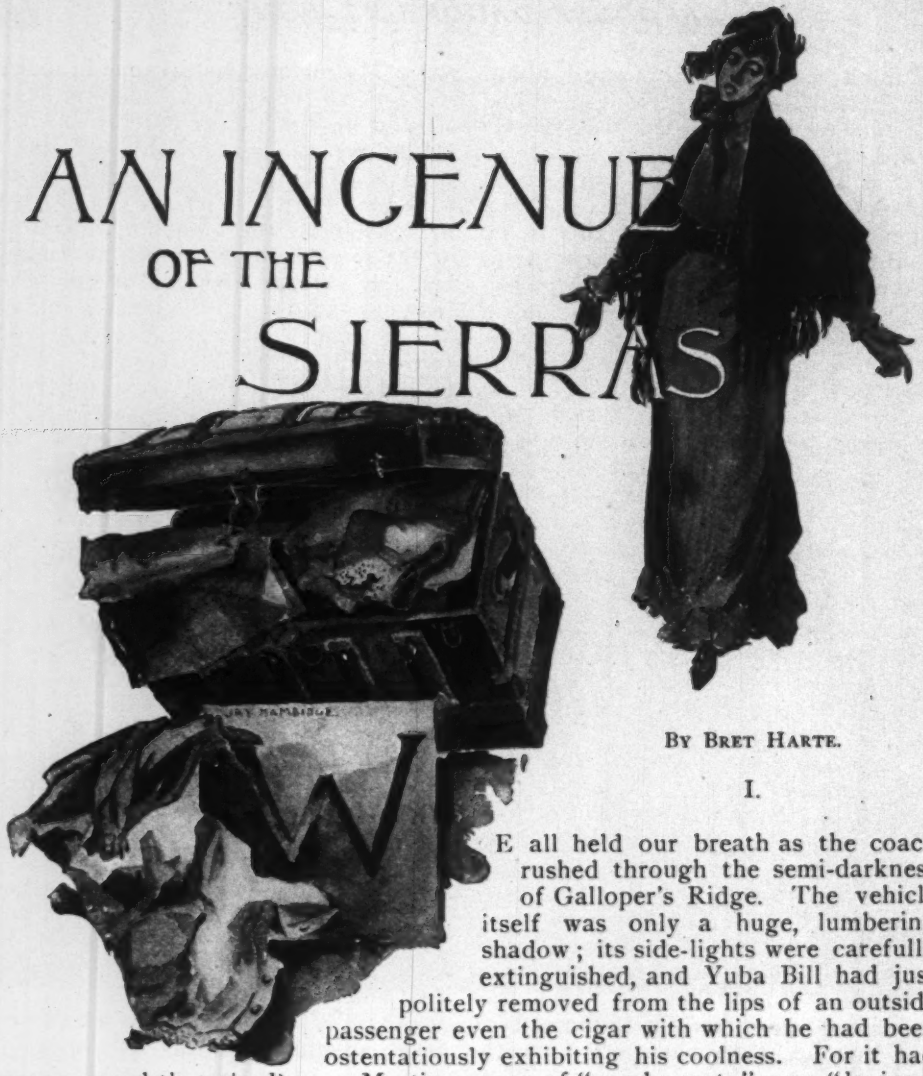
"I don't want to hear a word about him," cried Daudet. "He is the most abominable scoundrel that I have ever heard of."

It is strange that with such frank outspokenness he should have so few enemies, but the reason of this is, no doubt, the inexpressible charm of his manner. One cannot approach Daudet without loving him—loving him for his handsome face, his large heart, and the entire simplicity of a man who has been petted, but not spoiled, for so many years by Fortune and Fortune's favorites. Amongst men of letters, though many criticise his work, he is a universal favorite. I have seen him embraced like a father by those whom he has befriended. His charity is immense. Nobody applies to him for help or assistance in vain. It was amusing, and yet pathetic, to hear him the other day describing the interview he had had with a poor *confrère*, who came in rags, and who stood tearing at his straggling beard, hesitating to tell the real reason of his visit, which was to ask Daudet for the means to pay three terms of rent. Unless he paid at once, he and his family would be cast into the street. He went away a happy man, with Daudet's promise that his need would be met.

"In reviewing my past life," said Daudet, "I find that no period has remained more vividly impressed on my memory than the period of the war. My memory betrays me in many respects, so that I have compared it to a forest in which large patches burned up by the sun are quite dead. But 1870 is as clear in my mind as if it were yesterday. I can see the streets without light, the slouching shadows of the streets. I remember, as if they had just crossed my lips, the infamous fricassees that we ate. I was a soldier at the time, and oh, so energetic and full of life! It was the most active period of my life. I was always a *batailleur*, fond of sword-play and the hazards of combat, and I think that that period was the most intense of my existence. One date that I remember most vividly was that of the 31st of October, when the news of the surrender of Metz reached Paris. I was then in the ninety-seventh *de marche*, and was sent to communicate the news, on a winter's morning, to Myre de Villiers, who took me with him to communicate it to the soldiers at the different forts around Paris. What a poignant day that was! At each fort the general was surrounded by men. 'Metz is surrendered! We have been betrayed! Bazaine has turned traitor!' was what he had to say. I can remember some who burst into tears, others who threw down their guns and swore horribly. It was a great and a terrible experience. Still I prefer to think of that than of my horrible childhood. Is it possible," cried he, "that a child can be so unhappy as I was?"



AN INGENUE OF THE SIERRAS



By Bret Harte.

I.

WE all held our breath as the coach rushed through the semi-darkness of Galloper's Ridge. The vehicle itself was only a huge, lumbering shadow; its side-lights were carefully extinguished, and Yuba Bill had just politely removed from the lips of an outside passenger even the cigar with which he had been ostentatiously exhibiting his coolness. For it had been rumored that the Ramon Martinez gang of "road agents" were "laying" for us on the second grade, and would time the passage of our lights across Galloper's in order to intercept us in the "brush" beyond. If we could cross the ridge without being seen, and so get through the brush before they reached it, we were safe. If they followed, it would only be a stern chase, with the odds in our favor.

The huge vehicle swayed from side to side, rolled, dipped, and plunged, but Bill kept the track, as if, in the whispered words of the expressman, he could "feel and smell" the road he could no longer see. We knew that at times we hung perilously over the edge of slopes that eventually dropped a thousand feet sheer to the tops of the sugar-pines below, but we knew that Bill knew it also. The half-visible heads of the horses, drawn wedge-wise together by the tightened reins, appeared to cleave the darkness like a ploughshare, held between his rigid hands. Even the hoof-beats of the six horses had fallen into a vague, monotonous, distant roll. Then the ridge was crossed, and we plunged into the still blacker obscurity of the brush. Rather, we no longer seemed to move—it was only the phantom night that rushed by us. The horses might have been submerged in some swift Lethean stream; nothing but the top of the coach and the rigid bulk of Yuba Bill arose above them. Yet even in that awful moment

our speed was unslackened; it was as if Bill cared no longer to *guide*, but only to drive; or as if the direction of his huge machine was determined by other hands than his. An incautious whisperer hazarded the paralyzing suggestion of our "meeting another team." To our great astonishment Bill overheard it; to our greater astonishment he replied. "It 'ud be only a neck and neck race which would get to h—ll first," he said quietly. But we were relieved—for he had *spoken!* Almost simultaneously the wider turnpike began to glimmer faintly as a visible track before us; the wayside trees fell out of line, opened up and dropped off one after another; we were on the broader tableland, out of danger, and apparently unperceived and unpursued.

Nevertheless in the conversation that broke out again with the relighting of the lamps, and the comments, congratulations, and reminiscences that were freely exchanged, Yuba Bill preserved a dissatisfied and even resentful silence. The most generous praise of his skill and courage awoke no response. "I reckon the old man was just spilin' for a fight, and is feelin' disappointed," said a passenger. But those who knew that Bill had the true fighter's scorn for any purely purposeless conflict were more or less concerned and watchful of him. He would drive steadily for four or five minutes with thoughtfully knitted brows, but eyes still keenly observant under his slouched hat, and then, relaxing his strained attitude, would give way to a movement of impatience. "You ain't uneasy about anything, Bill, are you?" asked the expressman, confidentially. Bill lifted his eyes with a slightly contemptuous surprise. "Not about anything ter *come*. It's what *hez* happened that I don't exackly sabe. I don't see no signs of Ramon's gang ever havin' been out at all, and ef they were out I don't see why they didn't go for us."

"The simple fact is, that our ruse was successful," said an outside passenger. "They waited to see our lights on the ridge, and not seeing them, missed us until we had passed. That's my opinion."

"You aint puttin' any price on that opinion, air ye?" inquired Bill politely.

"No."

"'Cos thar's a comic paper in 'Frisco pays for them things, and I've seen worse things in it."

"Come off, Bill!" retorted the passenger, slightly nettled by the tittering of his companions. "Then what did you put out the lights for?"

"Well," returned Bill, grimly, "it mout have been because I didn't keer to hev you chaps blazin' away at the first bush you *thought* you saw move in your skeer, and bringin' down their fire on us."

The explanation, though unsatisfactory, was by no means an improbable one, and we thought it better to accept it with a laugh. Bill, however, resumed his abstracted manner.

"Who got in at the Summit?" he at last asked abruptly of the expressman.

"Derrick and Simpson of Cold Spring, and one of the 'Excelsior' boys," responded the expressman.

"And that Pike County girl from Dow's Flat, with her bundles. Don't forget her," added the outside passenger, ironically.

"Does anybody here know her?" continued Bill, ignoring the irony.

"You'd better ask Judge Thompson; he was mighty attentive to her, gettin' her a seat by the off window, and lookin' after her bundles and things."

"Gettin' her a seat by the *window?*" repeated Bill.

"Yes; she wanted to see everything, and wasn't afraid of the shooting."

"Yes," broke in a third passenger, "and he was so d——d civil that, when she dropped her ring in the straw, he struck a match agin all your rules, you know, and held it for her to find it. And it was just as we were crossin' through the brush, too. I saw the hull thing through the window, for I was hanging over the wheels with my gun, ready for action. And it wasn't no fault of Judge Thompson's if his d——d foolishness hadn't shown us up, and got us a shot from the gang."

Bill gave a short grunt, but drove steadily on without further comment, or even turning his eyes to the speaker.

We were now not more than a mile

from the station at the cross-roads where we were to change horses. The lights already glimmered in the distance, and there was a faint suggestion of the coming dawn on the summits of the ridge to the west. We had plunged into a belt of timber, when suddenly a horseman emerged at a sharp canter from a trail that seemed to be parallel with our own. We were all slightly startled; Yuba Bill alone preserving his moody calm.

"Hullo!" he said.

The stranger wheeled to our side as Bill slackened his speed. He seemed to be a "packer," or freight muleteer.

"Ye didn't get 'held up' on the Divide?" continued Bill, cheerfully.

"No," returned the packer, with a laugh; "*I* don't carry treasure. But I see you're all right, too. I saw you crossin' over Galloper's."

"*Saw* us?" said Bill sharply. "We had our lights out."

"Yes, but there was suthin' white—a handkerchief or woman's veil, I reckon—hangin' from the window. It was only a movin' spot agin the hillside, but ez I was lookin' out for ye I knew it was you by that. Good night!"

He cantered away. We tried to look at each other's faces, and at Bill's expression in the darkness, but he neither spoke nor stirred until he threw down the reins when we stopped before the station. The passengers quickly descended from the roof; the expressman was about to follow, but Bill plucked his sleeve.

"I'm goin' to take a look over this yer stage and these yer passengers with ye, afore we start."

"Why, what's up?"

"Well," said Bill, slowly disengaging himself from one of his enormous gloves, "when we waltzed down into the brush up there, I saw a man, ez plain ez I see you, rise up from it. I thought our time had come and the band was goin' to play, when he sorter drew back, made a sign, and we just scooted past him."

"Well?"

"Well," said Bill, "it means that this yer coach was *passed through free* to-night."

"You don't object to *that*, surely? I think we were deucedly lucky."

Bill slowly drew off his other glove. "I've been riskin' my everlastin' life on this d——d line three times a week," he said with mock humility, "and I'm allus thankful for small mercies. *But*," he added grimly, "when it comes down to being passed free by some pal of a hoss-thief, and thet called a speshal Providence, *I ain't in it!* No, sir, I ain't in it!"

II.

It was with mixed emotions that the passengers heard that a delay of fifteen minutes, to tighten certain screw-bolts, had been ordered by the autocratic Bill. Some were anxious to get their breakfast at Sugar Pine, but others were not averse to linger for the daylight that promised greater safety on the road. The expressman, knowing the real cause of Bill's delay, was nevertheless at a loss to understand the object of it. The passengers were all well known; any idea of complicity with the road agents was wild and impossible; and, even if there was a confederate of the gang among them, he would have been more likely to precipitate a robbery than to check it. Again, the discovery of such a confederate—to whom they clearly owed their safety—and his arrest, would have been quite against the Californian sense of justice, if not actually illegal. It seemed evident that Bill's quixotic sense of honor was leading him astray.

The station consisted of a stable, a wagon-shed, and a building containing three rooms. The first was fitted up with "bunks," or sleeping-berths, for the employees, the second was the kitchen, and the third and larger apartment was dining-room or sitting-room, and was used as general waiting-room for the passengers. It was not a refreshment station, and there was no "bar." But a mysterious command from the omnipotent Bill produced a demijohn of whiskey, with which he hospitably treated the company. The seductive influence of the liquor loosened the tongue of the gallant Judge Thompson. He admitted to having

struck a match to enable the fair Pike Countian to find her ring, which, however, proved to have fallen in her lap. She was "a fine, healthy young woman —a type of the Far West, sir; in fact, quite a prairie blossom, yet simple and guileless as a child." She was on her way to Marysville, he believed, "although she expected to meet friends —a friend, in fact—later on." It was her first visit to a large town—in fact, any civilized centre—since she crossed the plains three years ago. Her girlish curiosity was quite touching, and her innocence irresistible. In fact, in a country whose tendency was to produce "frivolity and forwardness in young girls," he "found her a most interesting young person." She was even then out in the stable-yard watching the horses being harnessed, "preferring to indulge a pardonable healthy young curiosity than to listen to the empty compliments of the younger passengers."

The figure which Bill saw thus engaged, without being otherwise distinguished, certainly seemed to justify the Judge's opinion. She appeared to be a well-matured country girl, whose frank gray eyes and large laughing mouth expressed a wholesome and abiding gratification in her life and surroundings. She was watching the replacing of luggage in the boot. A little feminine start, as one of her

"A FINE HEALTHY YOUNG WOMAN, A TYPE OF THE FAR WEST."

own parcels was thrown somewhat roughly on the roof, gave Bill his opportunity. "Now, there," he growled to the helper, "ye ain't carting stone! Look out, will yer! Some of your things, miss?" he added, with gruff courtesy, turning to her. "These yer trunks, for instance?"

She smiled a pleasant assent, and Bill, pushing aside the helper, seized a large, square trunk in his arms. But from excess of zeal, or some other mischance, his foot slipped, and he came down heavily, striking the corner of the trunk on the ground and loosening its hinges and fastenings. It was a cheap, common-looking affair, but the accident discovered in its yawning lid a quantity of white, lace-edged feminine apparel of an apparently superior quality. The young lady uttered another cry and came quickly forward, but Bill was profuse in his apologies, himself girded the broken box with a strap, and declared his intention of having the company "make it good" to her with a new one. Then he casually accompanied her to the door of the waiting-room, entered, made a place for her before the fire by simply lifting the nearest and most youthful passenger by the coat-collar from the stool that he was occupying, and, having installed the lady in it, displaced another man who was standing before the chimney, and, drawing himself up to his full six feet of height in front of her, glanced down upon his fair passenger as he took his waybill from his pocket.

"Your name is down here as Miss Mullins?" he said.

She looked up, became suddenly aware that she and her questioner were the centre of interest to the whole circle of passengers, and, with a slight rise of color, returned, "Yes."

"Well, Miss Mullins, I've got a question or two to ask ye. I ask it straight out afore this crowd. It's in my rights to take ye aside and ask it—but that aint my style; I'm no detective. I needn't ask it at all, but act as ef I knowed the answer, or I might leave it to be asked by others. Ye needn't answer it ef ye don't like; ye've got a friend over ther—Judge Thompson—who is a friend to ye, right or wrong, jest as any other man here is—as though ye'd packed your own jury. Well, the simple question I've got to ask ye is *this*—Did you signal to anybody from the coach when we passed Galloper's an hour ago?"

We all thought that Bill's courage and audacity had reached its climax here. To openly and publicly accuse a "lady" before a group of chivalrous Californians, and that lady possessing the further attractions of youth, good looks, and innocence, was little short of desperation. There was an evident movement of adhesion towards the fair stranger, a slight muttering broke out on the right, but the very boldness of the act held them in stupefied surprise. Judge Thompson, with a bland propitiatory smile, began: "Really, Bill, I must protest on behalf of this young lady—" when the fair accused, raising her eyes to her accuser, to the consternation of everybody answered with the slight but convincing hesitation of conscientious truthfulness:

"*I did.*"

"Ahem!" interposed the Judge, hastily, "er—that is—er—you allowed your handkerchief to flutter from the window. I noticed it myself, casually—one might say even playfully—but without any particular significance."

The girl, regarding her apologist with a singular mingling of pride and impatience, returned briefly:

"I signalled."

"Who did you signal to?" asked Bill, gravely.

"The young gentleman I'm going to marry."

A start, followed by a slight titter from the younger passengers, was instantly suppressed by a savage glance from Bill.

"What did you signal to him for?" he continued.

"To tell him I was here, and that it was all right," returned the young girl, with a steadily rising pride and color.

"Wot was all right?" demanded Bill.

"That I wasn't followed, and that he could meet me on the road beyond

Cass's Ridge Station." She hesitated a moment, and then, with a still greater pride, in which a youthful defiance was still mingled, said: "I've run away from home to marry him. And I mean to! No one can stop me. Dad didn't like him just because he was poor, and dad's got money. Dad wanted me to marry a man I hate, and got a lot of dresses and things to bribe me."

"And you're taking them in your trunk to the other fellow?" said Bill, grimly.

"Yes; he's poor," returned the girl, defiantly.

"Then your father's name is Mullins?" asked Bill.

"It's not Mullins. I—I—took that name," she hesitated, with her first exhibition of self-consciousness.

"Wot *is* his name?"

"Eli Hemmings."

A smile of relief and significance went round the circle. The fame of Eli or "Skinner" Hemmings, as a notorious miser and usurer, had passed even beyond Galloper's Ridge.

"The step that you're taking, Miss Mullins, I need not tell you, is one of great gravity," said Judge Thompson, with a certain paternal seriousness of manner, in which, however, we were glad to detect a glaring affectation, "and I trust that you and your affianced have fully weighed it. Far be it from me to interfere with or question the natural affections of two young people; but may I ask you what you know of the—er—young gentleman for whom you are sacrificing so much, and, perhaps, imperilling your whole future? For instance, have you known him long?"

THE EXPRESSMAN.

The slightly troubled air of trying to understand—not unlike the vague wonderment of childhood—with which Miss Mullins had received the beginning of this exordium, changed to a relieved smile of comprehension as she said quickly: "Oh, yes, nearly a whole year."

"And," said the Judge, smiling, "has he a vocation—is he in business?"

"Oh, yes," she returned, "he's a collector."

"A collector?"

"Yes; he collects bills, you know, money," she went on, with childish eagerness; "not for himself—*he* never has any money, poor Charley—but for his firm. It's dreadful hard work, too; keeps him out for days and nights, over bad roads and baddest weather. Sometimes, when he's

stole over to the ranch just to see me, he's been so bad he could scarcely keep his seat in the saddle, much less stand. And he's got to take mighty big risks, too. Times the folks are cross with him and won't pay; once they shot him in the arm, and he came to me, and I helped do it up for him. But he don't mind. He's real brave, jest as brave as he's good." There was such a wholesome ring of truth in this pretty praise that we were touched in sympathy with the speaker.

"What firm does he collect for?" asked the Judge, gently.

"I don't know exactly—he won't tell me—but I think it's a Spanish firm. You see"—she took us all into her confidence with a sweeping smile of innocent yet half-mischievous artfulness—"I only know because I peeped over a letter he once got from his firm, telling him he must hustle up and be ready for the road the next day; but I think the name was Martinez—yes, Ramon Martinez."

In the dead silence that ensued—a silence so profound that we could hear the horses in the distant stable-yard rattling their harness—one of the younger "Excelsior" boys burst into a hysteric laugh; but the fierce eye of Yuba Bill was down upon him, and seemed to instantly stiffen him into a silent, grinning mask. The young girl, however, took no note of it; following out, with lover-like diffusiveness, the reminiscences thus awakened, she went on:

"Yes, it's mighty hard work, but he says it's all for me, and as soon as we're married he'll quit it. He might have quit it before, but he won't take no money of me, nor what I told him I could get out of dad! That ain't his style. He's mighty proud—if he is poor—is Charley. Why, thar's all ma's money which she left me in the savin's bank that I wanted to draw out—for I had the right—and give it to him, but he wouldn't hear of it! Why, he wouldn't take one of the things I've got with me, if he knew it. And so he goes on ridin' and ridin', here and there and everywhere, and gettin' more and more played out and sad, and thin and pale as a spirit, and always so uneasy about his business, and startin' up at times when we're meetin' out in the south woods or in the far clearin', and sayin': 'I must be goin' now, Polly,' and yet always tryin' to be chiffle and chipper afore me. Why he must have rid miles and miles to have watched for me thar in the brush at the foot of Galloper's to-night, jest to see if all was safe, and Lordy! I'd have given him the signal and showed a light if I'd died for it the next minit. There! That's what I know of Charley—that's what I'm running away from home for—that's what I'm running to him for, and I don't care who knows it! And I only wish I'd done it afore—and I would—if—if—if—he'd only *asked me!* There now!" She stopped, panted, and choked. Then one of the sudden transitions of youthful emotion overtook the eager, laughing face; it clouded up with the swift change of childhood, a lightning quiver of expression broke over it—and—then came the rain!

I think this simple act completed our utter demoralization! We smiled feebly at each other with that assumption of masculine superiority which is miserably conscious of its own helplessness at such moments. We looked out of the window, blew our noses, said: "Eh—what?" and "I say," vaguely to each other, and were greatly relieved and yet apparently astonished when Yuba Bill, who had turned his back upon the fair speaker, and was kicking the logs in the fireplace, suddenly swept down upon us and bundled us all into the road, leaving Miss Mullins alone. Then he walked aside with Judge Thompson for a few moments; returned to us, autocratically demanded of the party a complete reticence towards Miss Mullins on the subject matter under discussion, reentered the station, re-appeared with the young lady, suppressed a faint, idiotic cheer which broke from us at the spectacle of her innocent face once more cleared and rosy, climbed the box, and in another moment we were under way.

"Then she don't know what her lover is yet?" asked the expressman, eagerly.

"No."

"WHAT FIRM DOES HE COLLECT FOR?" ASKED THE JUDGE, GENTLY.

"Are *you* certain it's one of the gang?"

"Can't say *for sure*. It mout be a young chap from Yolo who bucked agin the tiger at Sacramento, got regularly cleaned out and busted, and joined the gang for a flier. They say thar was a new hand in that job over at Keeley's—and a mighty game one, too—and ez there was some buckshot onloaded that trip, he might hev got his share, and that would tally with what the girl said about his arm. See! Ef that's the man, I've heered he was the son of some big preacher in the States, and a college sharp to boot, who ran wild in 'Frisco, and played himself for all he was worth. They're the wust kind to kick when they once get a foot over the traces. For stiddy, comf'ble kempany," added Bill reflectively, "give *me* the son of a man that was *hanged!*"

"But what are you going to do about this?"

"That depends upon the feller who comes to meet her."

"But you ain't going to try to take him? That would be playing it pretty low down on them both."

"Keep your hair on, Jimmy! The Judge and me are only going to rastle with the sperrit of that gay young galoot, when he drops down for his girl—and exhort him pow'ful! Ef he allows he's convicted of sin and will find the Lord, we'll marry him and the gal offhand at the next station, and the Judge will officiate himself for nothin'. We're goin' to have this yer elopement done on the square—and our waybill clean—you bet!"

"But you don't suppose he'll trust himself in your hands?"

"Polly will signal to him that it's all square."

"Ah!" said the expressman. Nevertheless in those few moments the men seemed to have exchanged dispositions. The expressman looked doubtfully,

critically, and even cynically before him. Bill's face had relaxed, and something like a bland smile beamed across it as he drove confidently and unhesitatingly forward.

Day, meantime, although full blown and radiant on the mountain summits around us, was yet nebulous and uncertain in the valleys into which we were plunging. Lights still glimmered in the cabins and few ranch buildings which began to indicate the thicker settlements. And the shadows were heaviest in a little copse, where a note from Judge Thompson in the coach was handed up to Yuba Bill, who at once slowly began to draw up his horses. The coach stopped finally near the junction of a small cross-road. At the same moment Miss Mullins slipped down from the vehicle, and, with a parting wave of her hand to the Judge, who had assisted her from the steps, tripped down the cross-road, and disappeared in its semi-obscurity. To our surprise the stage waited, Bill holding the reins listlessly in his hands. Five minutes passed—an eternity of expectation—and, as there was that in Yuba Bill's face which forbade idle questioning, an aching void of silence also! This was at last broken by a strange voice from the road:

"Go on; we'll follow."

The coach started forward. Presently we heard the sound of other wheels behind us. We all craned our necks backward to get a view of the unknown, but by the growing light we could only see that we were followed at a distance by a buggy with two figures in it. Evidently Polly Mullins and her lover! We hoped that they would pass us. But the vehicle, although drawn by a fast horse, preserved its distance always, and it was plain that its driver had no desire to satisfy our curiosity. The expressman had recourse to Bill.

"Is it the man you thought of?" he asked, eagerly.

"I reckon," said Bill, briefly.

"But," continued the expressman, returning to his former scepticism, "what's to keep them both from levanting together now?"

Bill jerked his hand toward the boot with a grim smile.

"Their baggage."

"Oh!" said the expressman.

"Yes," continued Bill. "We'll hang on to that gal's little frills and fixin's until this yer job's settled, and the ceremony's over, jest as ef we waz her own father. And, what's more, young man," he added, suddenly turning to the expressman, "*you'll* express them trunks of hers *through to Sacramento* with your kempany's labels, and hand her the receipts and checks for them so she *can get 'em there*. That'll keep *him* outer temptation and the reach o' the gang, until they get away among white men and civilization again. When your hoary-headed ole grandfather—or, to speak plainer, that partikler old whiskey-soaker known as Yuba Bill, wot sits on this box," he continued, with a diabolical wink at the expressman—"waltzes in to pervide for a young couple jest startin' in life, thar's nothin' mean about his style, you bet. He fills the bill every time! Speshul providences take a back seat when he's around."

When the station hotel and straggling settlement of Sugar Pine, now

THE "RAIN."

distinct and clear in the growing light, at last rose within rifle-shot on the plateau, the buggy suddenly darted swiftly by us—so swiftly that the faces of the two occupants were barely distinguishable as they passed—and, keeping the lead by a dozen lengths, reached the door of the hotel. The young girl and her companion leaped down and vanished within as we drew up. They had evidently determined to elude our curiosity, and were successful.

But the material appetites of the passengers, sharpened by the keen mountain air, were more potent than their curiosity, and, as the breakfast-bell rang out at the moment the stage stopped, a majority of them rushed into the dining-room and scrambled for places without giving much heed to the vanished couple or to the Judge and Yuba Bill, who had disappeared also. The through coach to Marysville and Sacramento was likewise waiting, for Sugar Pine was the limit of Bill's ministration, and the coach which we had just left went no farther. In the course of twenty minutes, however, there was a slight and somewhat ceremonious bustling in the hall and on the veranda, and Yuba Bill and the Judge re-appeared. The latter was leading, with some elaboration of manner and detail, the shapely figure of Miss Mullins, and Yuba Bill was accompanying her companion to the buggy. We all rushed to the windows to get a good view of the mysterious stranger and probable ex-brigand whose life was now linked with our fair fellow-passenger. I am afraid, however, that we all participated in a certain impression of disappointment and doubt. Handsome and even cultivated looking he assuredly was; young and vigorous in appearance. But there was a certain half-shamed, half-defiant suggestion in his expression, yet coupled with a watchful, lurking uneasiness which was not pleasant, and hardly becoming in a bridegroom—and the possessor of such a bride. But the frank, joyous, innocent face of Polly Mullins, resplendent with a simple, happy confidence, melted our hearts again, and condoned the fellow's shortcomings. We waved our hands; I think we would have given three rousing cheers as they drove away if the omnipotent eye of Yuba Bill had not been upon us. It was well, for the next moment we were summoned to the presence of that soft-hearted autocrat.

We found him alone with the Judge in a private sitting-room, standing before a table on which there was a decanter and glasses. As we filed expectantly into the room and the door closed behind us, he cast a glance of hesitating tolerance over the group.

"Gentlemen," he said slowly, "you was all present at the beginnin' of a little game this mornin', and the Judge thar thinks that you oughter be let in at the finish. *I* don't see that it's any of *your* d——d business, so to speak; but ez the Judge here allows you're all in the secret, I've called you in to take a partin' drink to the health of Mr. and Mrs. Charley Byng—ez is now comf'ably off on their bridal tower. What *you* know or what *you* suspects of the young galoot that's married the gal ain't worth shucks to anybody, and I wouldn't give it to a yaller pup to play with, but the Judge thinks you ought all to promise right here that you'll keep it dark. That's his opinion. Ez far as my opinion goes, gen'lemen," continued Bill, with greater blandness and apparent cordiality, "I wanter simply remark, in a keerless, offhand, gin'ral way, that ef I ketch any God-forsaken, lop-eared, chuckle-headed, blatherin' idjet arin' *his* opinion—"

"One moment, Bill," interposed Judge Thompson, with a grave smile, "let me explain. You understand, gentlemen," he said, turning to us, "the singular, and I may say affecting, situation which our good-hearted friend here has done so much to bring to what we hope will be a happy termination. I want to give here, as my professional opinion, that there is nothing in his request which, in your capacity as good citizens and law-abiding men, you may not grant. I want to tell you, also, that you are condoning no offence against the statutes; that there is not a particle of legal

evidence before us of the criminal antecedents of Mr. Charles Byng, except that which has been told you by the innocent lips of his betrothed, which the law of the land has now sealed forever in the mouth of his wife; and that our own actual experience of his acts has been in the main exculpatory of any previous irregularity, if not incompatible with it. Briefly, no judge would charge, no jury convict, on such evidence. When I add that the young girl is of legal age, that there is no evidence of any previous undue influence, but rather of the reverse, on the part of the bridegroom, and that I was content, as a magistrate, to perform the ceremony, I think you will be satisfied to give your promise, for the sake of the bride, and drink a happy life to them both."

I need not say that we did this cheerfully, and even extorted from Bill a grunt of satisfaction. The majority of the company, however, who were going with the through coach to Sacramento, then took their leave, and, as we accompanied them to the veranda, we could see that Miss Polly Mullins's trunks were already transferred to the other vehicle under the protecting seals and labels of the all-potent express company. Then the whip cracked, the coach rolled away, and the last traces of the adventurous young couple disappeared in the hanging red dust of its wheels.

But Yuba Bill's grim satisfaction at the happy issue of the episode seemed to suffer no abatement. He even exceeded his usual deliberately regulated potations, and, standing comfortably with his back to the centre of the now deserted bar-room, was more than usually loquacious with the expressman. "You see," he said, in bland reminiscence, "when your old Uncle Bill takes hold of a job like this, he puts it straight through without changin' hosses. Yet thar was a moment, young feller, when I thought I was stompt! It was when we'd made up our mind to make that chap tell the gal fust all what he was! Ef she'd rared or kicked in the traces, or hung back only ez much ez that, we'd hev given him jest five minits' law to get up and get and leave her, and we'd hev toted that gal and her fixin's back to her dad again! But she jest gave a little scream and start, and then went off inter hysterics, right on his buzzum, laughing and cryin' and sayin' that nothin' should part 'em. Gosh! if I didn't think *he* woz more cut up than she about it; a minit it looked as ef *he* didn't allow to marry her arter all, but that passed, and they was married hard and fast—you bet! I reckon he's had enough of stayin' out o' nights to last him, and ef the valley settlements hevn't got hold of a very shining member, at least the foothills hev got shut of one more of the Ramon Martinez gang."

THE SUPERINTENDENT.

"What's that about the Ramon Martinez gang?" said a quiet, potential voice.

Bill turned quickly. It was the voice of the divisional superintendent of the express company—a man of eccentric determination of character, and one of the few whom the autocratic Bill recognized as an equal—who had just entered the bar-room. His dusty pongee cloak and soft hat indicated that he had that morning arrived on a round of inspection.

"Don't care if I do, Bill," he continued, in response to Bill's invitatory gesture, walking to the bar. "It's a little raw out on the road. Well, what were you saying about the Ramon Martinez gang? You haven't come across one of 'em, have you?"

"No," said Bill, with a slight blinking of his eye, as he ostentatiously lifted his glass to the light.

"And you *won't*," added the superintendent, leisurely sipping his liquor. "For the fact is, the gang is about played out. Not from want of a job now and then, but from the difficulty of disposing of the results of their work. Since the new instructions to the agents to identify and trace all dust and bullion offered to them went into force, you see they can't get rid of their swag. All the gang are spotted at the offices, and it costs too much for them to pay a fence or a middleman of any standing. Why, all that flaky river gold they took from the Excelsior Company can be identified as easy as if it was stamped with the company's mark. They can't melt it down themselves; they can't get others to do it for them; they can't ship it to the Mint or Assay Offices in Marysville and 'Frisco, for they won't take it without our certificate and seals, and *we* don't take any undeclared freight *within* the lines that we've drawn around their beat, except from people and agents known. Why, *you* know that well enough, Jim," he said, suddenly appealing to the expressman, "don't you?"

Possibly the suddeness of the appeal caused the expressman to swallow his liquor the wrong way, for he was overtaken with a fit of coughing, and stammered hastily, as he laid down his glass, "Yes—of course—certainly."

"No, sir," resumed the superintendent cheerfully, "they're pretty well played out. And the best proof of it is, that they've lately been robbing ordinary passengers' trunks. There was a freight wagon 'held up' near Dow's Flat the other day, and a lot of baggage gone through. I had to go down there to look into it. Darned if they hadn't lifted a lot o' woman's wedding things from that rich couple who got married the other day out at Marysville. Looks as if they were playing it rather low down, don't it? Coming down to hard pan and the bed rock—eh?"

The expressman's face was turned anxiously towards Bill, who, after a hurried gulp of his remaining liquor, still stood staring at the window. Then he slowly drew on one of his large gloves. "Ye didn't," he said, with a slow, drawling, but perfectly distinct, articulation, "happen to know old 'Skinner' Hemmings when you were over there?"

"Yes."

"And his daughter?"

"He hasn't got any."

"A sort o' mild, innocent, guileless child of nature?" persisted Bill, with a yellow face, a deadly calm and Satanic deliberation.

"No. I tell you he *hasn't* any daughter. Old man Hemmings is a confirmed old bachelor. He's too mean to support more than one."

"And you didn't happen to know any o' that gang, did ye?" continued Bill, with infinite protraction.

"Yes. Knew 'em all. There was French Pete, Cherokee Bob, Kanaka Joe, One-eyed Stillson, Softy Brown, Spanish Jack, and two or three Greasers."

"And ye didn't know a man by the name of Charley Byng?"

"No," returned the superintendent, with a slight suggestion of weariness and a distraught glance toward the door.

"A dark, stylish chap, with shifty black eyes and a curled-up merstache?" continued Bill, with dry, colorless persistence.

"No. Look here, Bill, I'm in a little bit of a hurry; but I suppose you must have your little joke before we part. Now, what *is* your little game?"

"Wot you mean?" demanded Bill, with sudden brusqueness.

"Mean? Well, old man, you know as well as I do. You're giving me the very description of Ramon Martinez himself. Ha! Ha! No, Bill, you didn't play me this time! You're mighty spry and clever, but you didn't catch on just then."

He nodded and moved away with a light laugh. Bill turned a stony face to the expressman. Suddenly a gleam of mirth came into his gloomy eyes. He bent over the young man, and said in a hoarse, chuckling whisper:

"But I got even after all!"

"How?"

"He's tied up to that lying little she-devil, hard and fast!"

THE JE NE SAIS QUOI.

WILLIAM WHITEHEAD (1715–1785).

YES, I'm in love, I feel it now,
And Celia has undone me;
And yet I swear I can't tell how
The pleasing pain stole on me.

'Tis not her face which love creates,
For there no graces revel:
'Tis not her shape, for there the fates
Have rather been uncivil.

'Tis not her air, for sure in that
There's nothing more than common;
And all her sense is only chat,
Like any other woman.

Her voice, her touch, might give th' alarm;
'Twas both, perhaps, or neither;
In short, 'twas that provoking charm
Of Celia altogether.

HOMESTEAD AS SEEN BY ONE OF ITS WORKMEN.

By L. W.

IN Mr. Hamlin Garland's article on Homestead, printed in the last number of McClure's Magazine, the reader will find vividly presented the fresh, sharp impressions derived by the author from a visit of a few hours. The impressions and observations of one who has himself worked in the mills, and shared the lot and life there, may be of interest also.

On first viewing Homestead, two thoughts are forced upon a mind of mechanical bent: namely, the immense wealth necessary to build, equip, and run a plant of such magnitude; and the ingenuity and skill required to devise and manage it. The plant now has about seventy-five acres of ground in actual use, and employs from thirty-five hundred to four thousand men. It is equipped with the finest machinery that human invention can devise, and money buy. It is managed by men of great ability, and worked by a force of skilled laborers second to none. The policy has been to spare no expense in the matter of equipment; and to do or spend anything, from money to human life, in order to have a large product. The result is that to-day any single mill in the whole plant at Homestead has, probably, a larger possible output than any other mill of the same class in the world.

The thirty-five-inch mill, for example, has a possible output of three hundred and fifty tons of beams every twelve hours, or seven hundred every twenty-four. One would think that this was enough to supply the whole United States; yet the thirty-three-inch mill is nearly as large.

Even when one makes inspection only of the fine steel buildings with their huge engines and hydraulic cranes, and with the great piles of crude material and finished stock, he is impressed with the mountain of cold cash they represent. Yet the Carnegie Steel Company and its allied interests include vastly more than these. Across the river the Edgar Thompson plant is nearly as large, and includes the finest rail-mill and blast furnaces in the United States, if not in the world. The mill at Duquesne, for blooms and billets; the wire and nail mills at Beaver Falls; the structural mills in Twenty-ninth Street, Pittsburg, and those in Thirty-third Street; the Isabella Furnaces; the Lucy Furnaces; the Keystone Bridge Company; the immense coke industry consolidated and managed by Mr. H. C. Frick, together represent an amount of capital and ability equalled in but one other organization in the country. The company has branch offices in all the large cities of the United States; it has its own private telegraph lines to all important points; it has its own gas territory, and drills its own wells and pipes its own gas for all the mills. The office force is enormous. In the central office in Pittsburg, at the beginning of the present dull period, it is said, one hundred and fifty clerks were suspended at one time without crippling the force. The company has in its employ, all told, probably twenty-seven thousand men. If we consider the small average of five souls to a family, we can see that this company alone controls the happiness and prosperity of at least one hundred and thirty-five thousand people.

Proofs of skill and inventive genius are displayed on every hand. The processes are the result of a gradual and wide-spread development; but the magnificent machinery employed for rapidly and surely handling the

immense masses of metal is largely the conception and achievement of men who are, or have been, in the employ of the company as workmen in the mills.

When I went to the superintendent and asked for work, he said, "What can you do?"

"Anything. I am large, strong, active, and willing. I have been about machinery all my life, and want work badly."

He touched a button, and a boy appeared. "Show this man down to the converting-mill and ask Fred if he can do anything for him. Good morning," he said, and my interview was over.

I put on my new overalls and jumper, and followed my guide down through the mills. We made our way through piles of stock, raw material, rolls, etc., and came at last to the huge converting-mill. The superintendent was found, and the word delivered. He glanced at me a moment; then said, not unkindly: "You look good and strong; jump in and help those fellows there on those vessels."

I hardly knew what he meant; but through the smoke and steam I saw some men beneath one of the vessels, or converters,* working with sledges and bars to get the bottom off. The mill with its ponderous and massive cranes, the immense vessels all covered with black scale and soot, the flying sparks, the roaring flames, the lights coming and going, the air filled with steam and smoke, and, finally, the shrill and deafening noise, awed, confused, and even disconcerted me more than I should have liked to acknowledge.

I seized a sledge lying near and "jumped in." We at last got out the "keys," as they call the wedges which hold the converter together, and by the help of a hydraulic ram took the bottom off. This left a white-hot opening eight feet in diameter and about six feet from the ground, under which we must work. It seemed to me as though the skin on my neck and hands would burst with the heat. My clothes even steamed and smoked. How I wished I had been anywhere under the sun (good old Sol), rather than under this fiendishly hot sun hanging so very near us!

When we had the new bottom on, we went up to the platform above the converters, and drove the keys home more securely, and stopped any small hole there might be with "ball stuff."*

A shrieking engine passed by me and swiftly poured into the converter a "heat" of iron. Then the blast was turned on, and a cloud of yellow and saffron flame, mixed with sparks and small particles of metal, rushed out of the mouth of the converter into the air. One of the men caught me by the arm and pulled me away just in time to save me from being seriously burned; for I was not expecting the flame.

By noon I was so tired I could hardly stand, but I stuck to it for all I was worth. During the afternoon I frequently fell down because my knees were too weak to hold me up. My hands were burned and blistered, and my new overalls were filled with holes burned by flying sparks. About four o'clock in the afternoon, while working under the platform, I was startled to see a stream of red fire run over the edge of the platform and strike in the midst of some workmen. As it touched the wet ground it exploded with a report like that of a cannon. The molten metal flew in every direction. Many workmen were burned more or less severely; and in the case of one poor fellow—it makes me sick still to think of it—the steel came down directly on the head and back. We got him out of the steam and smoke, and carefully and tenderly cut his burned clothing

* The conversion of iron into steel by the Bessemer process consists of blowing a large quantity of air through the melted iron. The blast is introduced through the bottom of the vessel containing the iron, which is called the "converter"; and in the process this bottom is impaired and has to be constantly renewed. The iron is decarbonized and refined through the combination, by combustion, of the oxygen of the air with the carbon, silicon, and manganese of the iron. During the oxidation enough heat is generated to keep the metal in a liquid state. Usually the carbon is all burned out, and the decarbonized metal is then recarbonized by the addition of spiegeleisen, an alloy of manganese, iron and carbon, or by ferromanganese, an alloy richer in manganese. Coke dust is often used in high carbon steel.

* Ball stuff is ganister ground in an edgestone mill and mixed with water to the consistency of dough. When heated it becomes very hard and is much used for lining vessels and furnaces.

from him. As we placed him on the stretcher the burned flesh dropped from his bones. Yet they told me such an accident was liable to happen any time. The man lived, but at what a cost! Burned so as to be hardly recognizable, he lingers out a miserable existence, a burden to himself and his friends.

When I was relieved at six o'clock, it seemed as if it would have been utterly impossible for me to live in that mill another hour. I dragged myself to my room and went to bed at once. All that night I tossed and turned my aching bones, trying to get into some position less painful than the last. I was tortured by a thousand grotesque fancies, and by the picture of the poor fellow who was burned so badly. At last I got into an uneasy drowse, but I felt as if I had not been asleep a minute when my alarm clock announced to me that it was 4.45 and that I must get up to my 5.10 breakfast. Oh, the misery of that rising and going to the mill! Every bone and sinew seemed as if made of red-hot iron, and the joints as if rusted together.

It was a dark, foggy morning, I found when, having desperately got up enough will-power to dress, I tumbled out to my boarding-house. The Pittsburg smoke and fog are proverbial, but I really think that on that particular morning one might have cut tangible chunks out of the black wet air. The board walks in Homestead are never in repair, and on the way to the mills I stumbled along through mud and stones, over boards and into holes, carrying in my hand my tin dinner-bucket, which contained my mid-day meal.

On my first Sunday we relined the converter, and it became my duty to stand up in the inverted vessel and hand up ball stuff and limestone with which to reline it. The vessel had been left to cool simply overnight, and I suppose the temperature of the dry air inside of it stood at about one hundred and forty degrees. I worked as hard as I could, but near noon I fainted, for the first time in my life.

My experience at Homestead was the experience of the majority of workmen there. The working hours are from six A. M. to six P. M. one week, and from six P. M. to six A. M. the next. The nature of the work, and of the consequent life, will be best indicated by a little tour of the mills. I will start in the converting-mill.

A Bessemer converter, with its twelve tons of molten iron under full blast, is the grandest display of pyrotechnics that man has yet achieved. The thunder of the blast deafens you; the ever-brightening flame, flashing up finally as high as fifty feet, blinds you; sparks fall everywhere; smoke and steam confuse you; your mind and senses are in a whirl. Yet, however confused, a sense of the majesty and glory of the display is never absent from your thoughts. The blast finished, the converter tips downward, while a huge crane places before it a ladle of the capacity of fifteen tons. The converter is tipped a little more, and the white, fiery liquid runs into the ladle. The ferromanganese is then thrown in, to recarbonize the steel, and this is attended with a violent reaction. Flames leap up, and not infrequently the metal boils over the edge of the ladle.

From the ladle the metal is poured into ingot moulds of sizes differing according to need, and placed on cars. When the moulds are filled the cars are drawn by a puffing, screeching little engine, called a dinkey, into the rolling-mills, where the ingots are to be used. There an ingenious device called a "stripper" takes off the mould, and leaves the ingot, now a red mass of steel, ready for the "soaking pit," in which it is to be heated to a soft white heat throughout, before being rolled. Then a huge crane, of twenty-five tons capacity, wheels deftly around, picks up the ingot with a pair of heavy tongs, and swings it off smartly to the mouth of the pit. The cover is rolled back from the pit by men with bars, and the ingot is lowered into place. When, in the "heater's" opinion, it is hot enough, the men roll the cover back again, and the crane carries the piece to the rolls in the manner described by Mr. Garland.

Sometimes the tongs of the crane slip, and the ingot falls against the side of the pit and gets wedged tight.

Then is the time to see men working in the heat. They struggle and strain at their bars, now pushing, now pulling, working with a strength and desperation the stranger cannot understand. A minute lost means so much less pay to every one of them, for they are "tonnage" men, and are paid entirely in proportion to the product of the mill. The sweat pours from their faces and arms, their clothes smoke and steam, their eyes are blurred with the steam rising from their faces, and the cords stand out on their brawny necks.

The "bottom-makers" at work are a spectacle of terrific labor, too. See them wielding their heavy tools—lifting, punching, pulling, and scraping over that awful hole which fumes forth consuming heat. You find it too hot for you, and you stand at least four feet from the pit. But the "bottom-makers" are directly over the pit's mouth. The shoes they wear have soles an inch and a quarter thick, and yet the heat often blisters their feet. A man at such work drinks probably six or seven gallons of water a day, and most of the time has a heart action of about one hundred and twenty-five to the minute.

The "heater" must be a workman of great skill and judgment. One might think it would not be hard to tell when the ingots were hot; but look into the pit. Very likely you will say it is empty when in it are two ingots nearly ready to roll. Your eye has not been trained to such a bright light, and you cannot distinguish the ingot from the incandescent walls of the pit. The "heater" must know the grade of steel he is handling, and heat it accordingly. A high carbon steel would be made of no value whatever if heated to the heat which a low carbon steel receives. He must heat to the limit, and not one degree over. If the piece is not hot enough, it will probably break a roll. If it is too hot, it is ruined by being "burned." The "heater" must be saving of his gas and careful of his pits, and he must get from his pits and from his men the most work possible.

The "roller" also must be a man of unusual skill and judgment. There is in use in the thirty-five-inch mill a twenty-six hundred horse-power engine with a forty-foot fly-wheel. But such is the pressure required to squeeze the beam into shape, that I have frequently seen this engine stalled and the ingot stuck in the rolls. Often under the pressure the rolls, though they are nearly three feet in diameter, snap in two. Therefore the man in charge, the "roller," cannot be too careful. A mistake of only one-sixteenth of an inch in his draught may mean a broken roll. And as a roll costs about one thousand dollars, the loss of one or two may cost the "roller" his place. His weights must be accurate. The beams must be delivered straight. If the rolls are not exactly over each other, the beam will curve, and the "roller" must not only see that it does not curve, but also know the reason why if it does. In short, he must be on the alert at all times, and he must be able to manage his men.

The men are changing rolls now. Note that wrench—a piece of iron and steel weighing three thousand pounds. It is not much like the familiar monkey-wrench. See the cranes working swiftly and lightly, handling rolls, boxes, bearings, and rest-bars. The men are covered with grime and grease from the bearings. A seventy-five pound "S" hook hanging above in the chain falls, and strikes a man on the head. Two others run for a stretcher, and the poor fellow has many a long week in bed. He is lucky to have escaped with his life. Yet they work on just the same. The loss of a finger or toe is a matter of common occurrence. That big wrench swinging round in the air is the source of much danger, and many and many a time have I seen the man on top of the rolls jump over it and heard it crash against the housing behind him. Suppose a roll chain breaks, as they often do! The doctor's report for Homestead for the last year records over a thousand accidents and at least a dozen deaths. Yet there is no lack of men. The managers have applications from twice the number they can give positions to.

The plate-mill—a mill capable of

rolling plate as wide as one hundred and nineteen inches—is perhaps the most picturesque of them all. The furnaces are placed in a circle, and a man sits on his crane and swings with it from furnace to rolls. The furnaces are of the horizontal type, differing therein from the pits.

The throwing of salt on the plates to cut off the scale causes a tremendous roar and explosion, like a volley of musketry. When salt crystallizes it does so by the aid of moisture, and when it is thrown on the plate the rolls crush it; the moisture is at once vaporized, and the explosion blows the scale loose, to be washed off by the water which is sprayed on the plate. The "roller," or "screw-down" as he is here called, stands upon a platform nearly over the work, and the steam and scale are very bad for the lungs. The operation is very simple; but the rapidity of action, and the play of light and shade, combined with the roar of the exploding salt, give a fascination to the scene.

We come next to the open-hearth furnaces. These are almost the only basic open-hearth furnaces in successful operation in the United States. Each furnace holds about thirty tons of metal, and it takes about eight hours to charge and finish a "heat." The process is more exact than the Bessemer; the carbon is more certain; the steel is purer and more homogeneous, and is tougher. The process is used for the finer grades of work and for the armor-plate work.

Each furnace has its own melter and two helpers. Here is one that they are charging by hand. The long, flat iron shovel is called a peel and is managed by the first helper. Obedient to a shout, the boy at the levers raises the door; the helper slides the bar with the metal on it into the furnace, and, at the right spot, turns it and leaves the pig iron in the furnace. By the time they have loaded in twenty-five or thirty tons of metal in this way, they are ready to stop.

Of the heat at a furnace door one can have no conception unless he has done the actual work. Four feet away the heat is sufficient to make your clothes smoke; and there are times when a man must work directly up at the door. The skin contracts and seems about to burst; a steam rises from it, and the salty perspiration gets into the eyes and pours in streams from the face. After such work a man can sometimes actually wring water from his clothes and even pour it from his shoes.

In a furnace at my left they are patching the lining. The operation is very much the same as that of charging, save that a ladle is used instead of a shovel, and the shovelful of dolomite must be thrown into exactly the right place. The melter and helper both work in this case, and a great deal of care is exercised to fill all hollows and pits in the lining. If great care is not exercised, the heat may burn through and all go to the bottom of the pit together. When an accident of this kind happens, dynamite is often used to break up the chilled heat.

Here is a furnace with a "heat" ready to pour. The ladle is in place, and the stopper set and dried. Dryness is absolutely necessary in all this work, for when melted steel touches moisture there is an explosion, caused by the sudden evolution of steam. The "heat" is tapped with a long iron bar, and twenty-five tons of boiling white liquid fire flow into the ladle with a great flutter of sparks and flame. The helpers are kept busy keeping the tapping holes clear. As soon as the "heat" is out, they set to work to clean the furnace of slag and prepare it for another "heat."

The ladle is lifted by a crane and placed on a truck. A "dinkey" pushes it down to a large crane in the centre of a huge pit. In this pit are the moulds, all set and ready for the steel. The crane gently picks up the ladle, moves it easily and accurately to the appointed place, and the stopper is pulled. Most of the moulds here are poured from the bottom and not from the top, as with the Bessemer. A central sprue is set, with pipes leading to the moulds and entering them at the bottom. This insures a better ingot, as there is less occluded air and less action of boiling.

The large moulds here are built up in sections and clamped together. After a "heat" has been poured the men must get down into that hot hole, knock the clamps off, hook the cranes onto the pieces, and set the sprues, after sweeping the stools, to prepare for another "heat."

It is frightfully hot in the pit. A man can only stay there an instant. One man jumps down, strikes a couple of blows, and is pulled out again; another takes his place, and he in turn is succeeded by another. All are sweating profusely, and with the hot sand on the feet, and the fine, hot dust in their eyes, are miserable. Yet nobody falters or hangs back; each one jumps in, in his turn, and is hauled out laughing but exhausted. Think of getting down into a pit where the "heat" which has just been poured is standing on each side of you, while behind and in front are the walls so hot that they would char wood were it put against them!

Amidst all this toil and danger the men are not without their sports. It is, let us suppose, two o'clock in the morning, and word has come to the rolling-mills that the converting-mill has broken down and that there will be no more steel for at least three hours. The waiters dispose themselves for rest or play as best they can. There is one who has fallen asleep in spite of his efforts to keep awake. He sleeps the sleep of utter exhaustion. But creeping stealthily toward him is a fellow-workman, who has in his hand a piece of freshly burnt limestone and a cup of water. He places the limestone on the sleeper's leg, and pours the water on it. The limestone begins to steam and smoke.

Still the man sleeps on. But in a moment he stirs uneasily, then springs to his feet with a cry of pain, only to be greeted with a howl of laughter from a crowd of men who have been watching the fun (?). He holds the hot burned cloth of his trousers away from his blistered skin. Any wrath he may have he best keep to himself, for a man caught sleeping is a fair mark for any joke, however hard. I have seen a shovelful of hot sand put on a man's shoe. No matter how quickly the victim may get his shoe off, in such a case, he has a large blister to warn him not to sleep again.

There is Bill, the greatest wag in the mill, asleep in plain sight on a pile of sand. In Bill this looks suspicious; but a confiding fellow-workman, Jim, who has been his victim in many a trick, steals up to "bug" him, as this burning a man with a bit of lime is called. Bill, however, has a flexible, jointed iron pipe concealed in the sand, and a confederate at the valve. As Jim is about to place the lime, Bill raises his arm with the nozzle under it; his confederate turns the valve, and a stream of water one and one-quarter inches in diameter, driven with a force of five hundred pounds to the square inch, strikes Jim squarely in the chest, lifting him clear from the ground. Bill coolly keeps the nozzle pointed at him and completely drenches him, though he crawls away as fast as he can.

A man lying down, but obviously wide awake, is approached secretly from behind by another, who places a hot brick convenient to his grasp. Then the second, with much parade, makes an attempt to "bug" him. The lounger springs to his feet with a cry of rage, and looking about for something to throw, seizes the hot brick, and gets a blistered hand to nurse along with his wrath.

Such are their jokes. Rough? Rather; but then, the work is rough, too! And what is the life of the doers of such work when the work is done?

It is Saturday. All day long lines of men have been going to the office for their pay. After a long wait the precious pay is secured, and they return to the mills to work. When they get home at night the first thing three-quarters of them do is to change their clothes and start for Pittsburg to have "a time." Out of the three thousand five hundred men who receive their pay, how many do you think put the bulk of it to any good use? Very few. After a hard week's work the relaxation is tremendous. The man feels that he is free again; that he has been a slave—yes, worse than a slave—for two whole weeks; and now he will enjoy the money he has so hardly earned.

He does not know any better; he cannot look ahead and see that he is throwing away the best years of a very short life in a wild riot. He only feels that he must have a "good time." Such a time as he has, too! A hard worker, he is also a hard drinker.

How do they stand it? How could any human being stand it? No one knows. They all die young. Very few men well along in years are found anywhere about the mills. Yet these men go on for a number of years, and any one of them could do twice the work in the heat that any man could who had worked as the men work in the East.

Of course there are exceptions. Many of the men have happy families, and those of the better class are very well off. The company houses are very good, and have all the modern conveniences, and the men who are sober and care for their families, besides being prosperous, live comfortably. But the average mill-man is a reckless daredevil. Independent and prodigal, he combines many good with many bad qualities. He is generous to a fault, yet he forgets or neglects to care for his family. He lives upon his animal nature, and then debauches it by the wildest excesses. He is not as a rule a man of a high order of intelligence, but still he is quick and skilful in his work. A strange character surely; a creature who seems to be made by the work, and not for it.

THE REVOLT OF THE ——.

A PAGE FROM THE DOMESTIC HISTORY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

By Robert Barr.

MR. MADAX sat before his desk in a most despondent attitude, his head in his hands, and his hands in his hair. Things were going badly in the City, as, alas! they often do. Mr. Madax was alone in his office in Old Gold Alley. He wanted time to think, and had given orders that he was not to be disturbed. All the thinking he appeared able to do did not seem to help matters, so at last he pulled himself together and paced up and down the room. Finally he stopped and said to himself: "That seems the only thing to do. I shall consult with my wife. I wish she came home more frequently, and then we could talk over these matters."

He seized a telegraph blank and wrote:

"Mrs. John Madax, 20 Bullion Court, City. Can you run over to Old Gold Alley for a few minutes? I wish to consult you on business.

"Madax."

He rang the bell for a telegraph boy, and sent the message; then paced up and down his room again, waiting for his wife to appear. Instead, there came a prompt answer, which he tore open and read feverishly:

"Sorry I can't come this forenoon. Too busy. Call on me at one o'clock, and I will take you to the club, where we can lunch and have a quiet talk.

"Joan Madax."

The worried man consulted his watch. It was not yet eleven. It would be more than two hours before he could see his wife. He sat down at his desk and devoted himself for those two hours to what business there was in hand. Then he brushed himself up a bit, took his walking-stick, and drove in a hansom to his wife's offices in Bullion Court. After having sent in his name, a neat little girl showed him into a room and told him

that Mrs. Madax would be with him presently. She was sorry to keep him waiting, but she sent a copy of the "Sketch" for him to look over during the interval. The "Sketch" was a paper started in the nineteenth century, and was at that time considered to be rather in advance of other slow-going weeklies. Now, however, it was thought to be the correct paper for a man to read, although the women paid little attention to it. In the reception-room two or three other men were waiting, nursing their hats. Presently the office girl came in, and told them all, except Madax, that Mrs. Madax couldn't possibly see them until later in the day, as she had an appointment: and would they be good enough to call about four o'clock. So the men took their departure, and Madax was left alone with his paper, although his wife entered very soon after. She was a tall woman, with fine, clear-cut, decided features. As far as the upper part of her was concerned, she was dressed almost like a man. She wore a somewhat glaring necktie and a stand-up collar. Her brown hair was cut short and parted at the side, while the hair of her husband, dark, and streaked with gray, seemed to part naturally in the middle. The neat, tailor-made skirt which Mrs. Madax wore had pockets at each side, high up, and very similar in cut to a man's pockets. Her right hand was thrust into one of these pockets, and she jingled some coins and keys as she entered the room where her husband was waiting.

"Well, John," she cried, "excuse me for keeping you, but we have had a very busy morning. However, if you are ready now, I am. We will go to the Pine Ear Club and have lunch." She approached her husband as she spoke, and patted him with some affection on the shoulder. He looked up at her and smiled. Somehow her influence had a soothing, protective air about it, which made the man feel he was not battling with the world alone. One of the numerous girl clerks came in with a long ulster, which Mrs. Madax put on, thrusting one hand in the armhole and then the other, while the girl held the garment by the collar. When Mrs. Madax had buttoned up the ulster and put a jaunty round hard hat on her head, she looked more like a man than ever, and Madax himself seemed almost effeminate beside her.

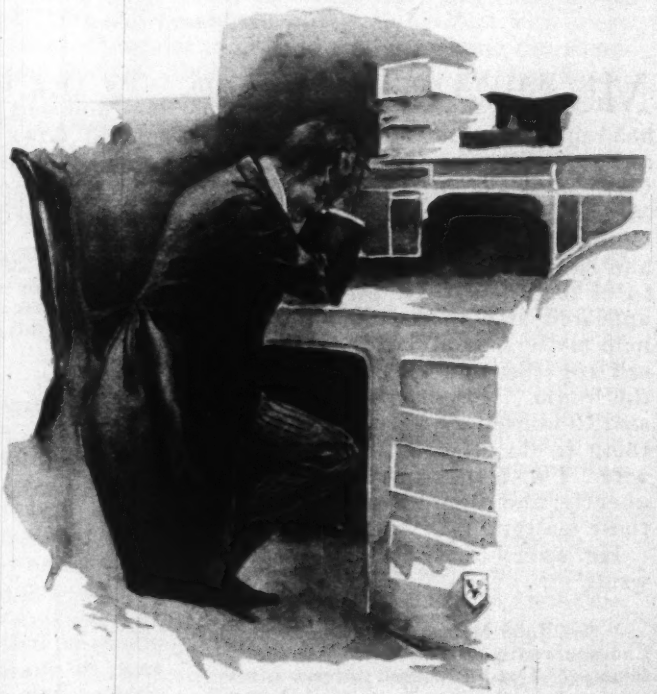
"Is my brougham at the door?" she asked the girl.

"Yes, madam."

"Come along, John, we have no time to lose," said Mrs. Madax, decidedly, and, leading the way, she opened the carriage door, whereupon he stepped inside.

"To the Pine Ear Club," said the lady to the coachman.

She took her seat beside her husband, and the carriage drove off toward



MR. MADAX SAT BEFORE HIS DESK IN A MOST DESPONDENT ATTITUDE.

the West End. In a short time it drew up before a palatial building standing where the Hotel Metropole once stood. This, as every one knows, is the Pine Ear Club, the sumptuous resort of women engaged in business in the city. It is higher priced than the Carlton or Reform, but is much more luxurious than either of these old-fashioned men clubs.

"Call for me at half-past three," said the lady to her coachman.

The stately doors of the club were opened by two girl porters, and the couple entered. The lady wrote her husband's name in a book which was on a stand in the hall, and together they entered the large dining-room, where they took their places at one of the small tables set for two near one of the large front windows.

"We will take the regular club lunch," she said to one of the waiters. "And bring a bottle of '84 champagne —a large bottle."

"I—I don't think I care for champagne," said Madax, hesitatingly; "it gives me a headache."

"Nonsense," cried his wife; "a glass or two will do you good. You look worried."

"I am worried, and that is what I wished to see you about."

"Well, we won't talk business during lunch, if you please;" adding, as she leaned back in her chair, "it's a habit I never indulge in. It's bad for one. We can have a talk in the smoking-room afterward. How are the children?"

"Very well, thank you. The girl is a little hard on the boy and knocks him about a bit, but they are getting on very well."

"Poor little fellow!" said Mrs. Madax. "Boys are such a worry to their parents, when one thinks that they have to encounter this world alone. I must run down and see them next week, if I can."

"I wish you would," said Madax; "the children miss you very much. Why don't you come home oftener?"

"Well, very soon I expect to be able to do so," she replied; "but, like you, I have a great deal on my mind at present, and the market requires close watching."

"Can't you come home with me to-night?" he asked. "The children would be so pleased to see you."

"No," she answered. "I have to take Sir Cæsar Camp out to dinner to-night."

"To-morrow night, then?" he suggested deprecatingly.

"No," said the lady, shaking her head, "it's worse still to-morrow night. I have a lot of stock brokers dining with me at the Holborn."

"It must cost you a lot of money, these dinners on every night."

"Yes, it does," said Mrs. Madax; "but my experience is, if you want to make a good business deal with a man, you must first feed him well. I always see that the wines are irreproachable. I will say one thing for the men, that they always know good wine when they taste it."

"Well," said Madax, "I will tell the children that you send your love to them; but I think, you know, that a woman shouldn't lose sight of her children, even though business is absorbing."

She urged him to take his share of the champagne, but Madax declined, saying: "A man must keep his head clear for business nowadays."

"Yes," said his wife, "I suppose a man must."

There was a slight tinge of sarcasm in her voice, and she put unnecessary emphasis on the noun. Madax looked grieved, but said nothing. How often do women in their thoughtless rudeness cause pain to the tender hearts of those who love them!

After lunch was over, Mrs. Madax led the way up-stairs to the private smoking-room which she had reserved for their use. It was in a corner of the club building, overlooking a bit of the river, and commanding a view of Charing Cross railway bridge.

"We will be quite undisturbed here," she said, "and can talk business."

Ringing a bell to give an order, she asked her husband:

"What will you drink?"

"Nothing, thank you," he replied, but added afterward: "I will have a glass of milk and soda, if you can get it."

"You will smoke, of course," said his wife.

"A cigarette," answered Madax.

When the waiter appeared, Mrs. Madax said: "Bring a glass of milk and soda, some of the best Egyptian cigarettes, two Havana cigars, and a glass of special Scotch with seltzer."

When these materials were brought and the waiter had disappeared, Mrs. Madax walked to the door and turned the key in it. Her husband lit his cigarette from the match she held out to him, and then, biting the end from her own cigar, she began to smoke. She thrust her two hands deep down in her pockets, and began to pace up and down the room.

"Now, John," she cried, "what's the trouble?"

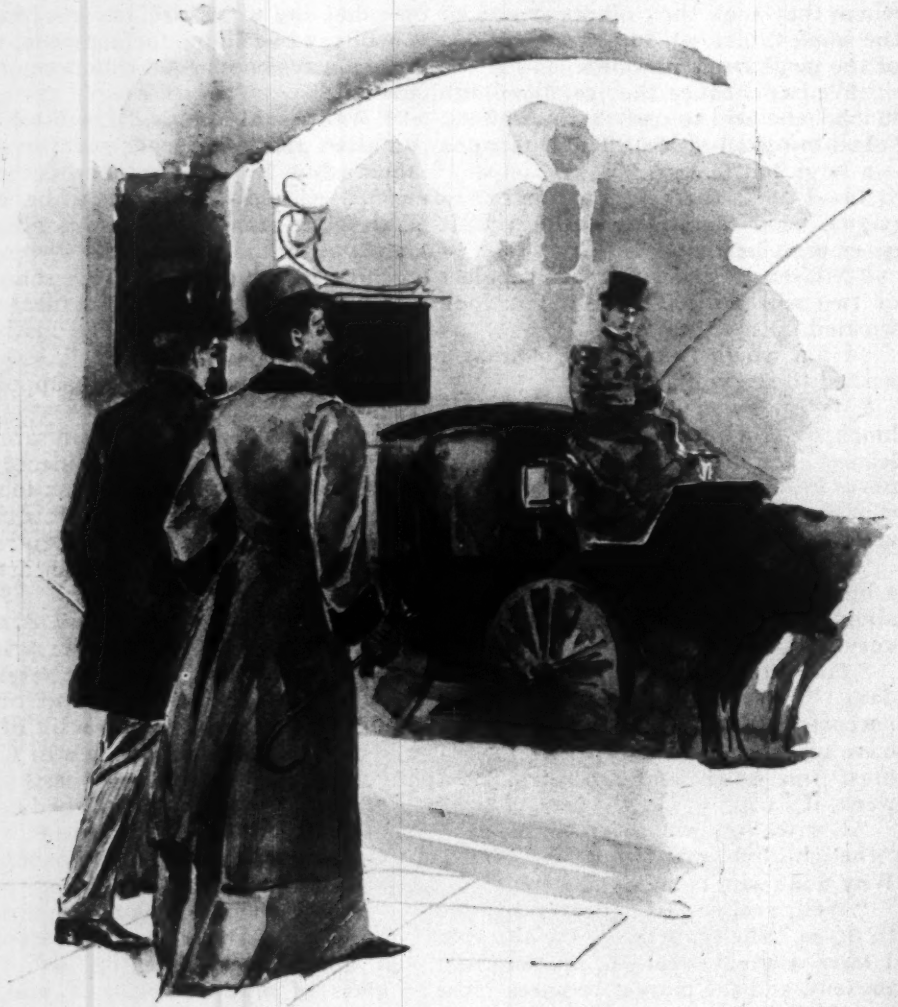
Mr. Madax's name was Billy, but everybody called him John because his wife's name was Joan. Mr. John Madax was the name he was known by.

"Some months ago," began Mr. Madax, "I went into a wheat deal, and I don't quite see my way out."

Mrs. Madax stopped in her pacing and faced her husband in surprise.

"A wheat deal?" she cried. "What side of the market are you on?"

"Oh, I'm on for a rise."



"COME ALONG, JOHN, WE HAVE NO TIME TO LOSE."

His wife made a gesture of despair, and began walking up and down the room again.

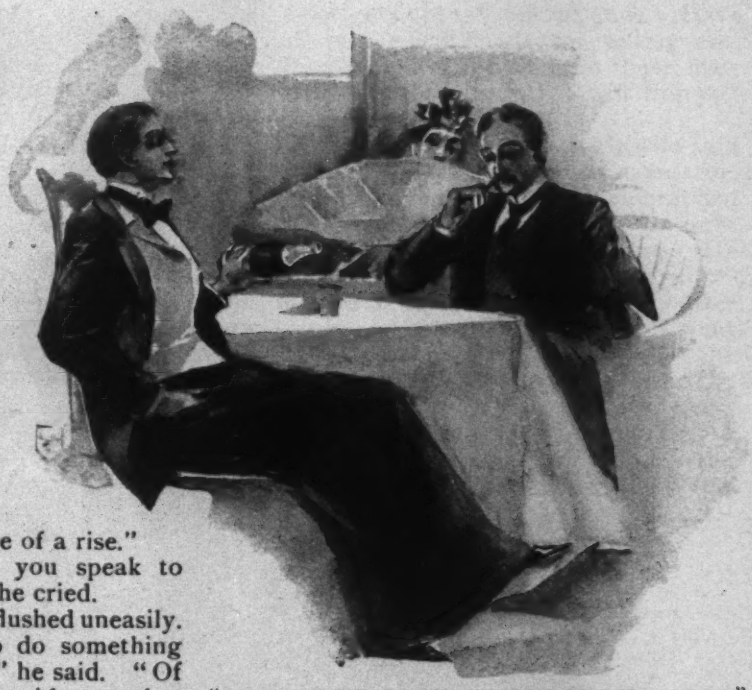
"What, in heaven's name, did you buy for a rise for?"

"Well," said Madax, very humbly, "you see, the American wheat crop had practically failed, and I thought I was pretty sure of a rise."

"Why didn't you speak to me about it?" she cried.

Her husband flushed uneasily.

"I wanted to do something off my own bat," he said. "Of course, I had no idea at that time there would be a corner in wheat."



"A MAN MUST KEEP HIS HEAD CLEAR FOR BUSINESS NOWADAYS." "YES," SAID HIS WIFE, "I SUPPOSE A MAN MUST."

"Corner!" she cried, contemptuously, "there's always a corner; there's bound to be a corner. Don't you know enough not to look to the United States any more for indications of the wheat market? India and the Baltic hold the key to the situation."

"Yes, I know—at least, I know now," he said; "but there is no use in upbraiding me for what I have done. I am up to the neck in wheat, and the signs to-day are that it is going lower than ever. Now, what would you advise me to do, Joan?"

"Oh, advise you!" she cried. "What's the use of coming to me when it is too late? I advise you to get out of it as cheaply as you can."

Her husband groaned.

"I am afraid," he said, "that will mean practical ruin now."

"Well, my opinion is, that wheat is going lower still."

"Then it is utter ruin for me," said Madax, dejectedly.

Mrs. Madax stopped once more in her pacing the room, and confronted her husband. "John," she said, "why don't you give up your office in the City and go home and take care of the children?"

A spark of resentment appeared in the man's eyes as he gazed at his wife.

"I don't want to be entirely dependent on you," he said at last.

"Pooh!" said his wife; and then she added: "I will make you a handsome allowance for housekeeping, and as much as you want besides. You are worrying yourself to death about business. You ought to take a run to Brighton, or go off to Monte Carlo, and give up bothering about City affairs."

The man sighed.

"That's all very well, but you don't see that I want to make some money for myself."

"But you are not making it; you're losing it. You say you are up to the neck; how much does that mean?"

"Twenty-five thousand pounds," he said with a sigh.

"Dear, dear!" she said; "and I suppose that is all the money you have."

"I DON'T WANT TO BE ENTIRELY DEPENDENT ON YOU," HE SAID AT LAST.

"It is more than all the money I have," he answered.

"I wish you had spoken to me before; it is too late now. Don't you see that?"

"Yes; but I had something to propose. You spoke of taking Sir Cæsar Camp to dinner. Now, I don't know what you want to get him in on, but I do know that I could get him on my side of the wheat deal, and he would bring in others. Then we might be able to stop the break in the market."

Mrs. Madax's eyes sparkled as she looked down at her husband.

"Can you really do all that?" she asked, almost breathlessly.

"Yes, if I had any assurance that we would get out with a little profit. It seems to me that all their influence thrown in on our side of the market would give us rise enough to get out of the hole, at least."

"Oh!" said his wife, "that is a different matter. I didn't know you had any plans. Yes," she added, after thinking a moment with knitted brows, "that's a first-rate idea. How much money do you think it would all total up to?"

"About a million," said Madax, pleased to see that he was getting more attention than censure.

"A million," said his wife, more to herself than to him. "Are you certain you could get all that amount on your side of the market?"

"Quite certain."

Mrs. Madax, as she continued her pacing up and down, seemed to be

making some mental calculation. She finally asked:

"Who are you running against? Who is at the head of the corner?"

"Oh, that," said Madax, "none of us knows. The business is done through the Tokio and Jamboree Bank, but we don't know who is behind it."

"Now, doesn't it strike you that the first thing for you to do is to find out who you are butting against? If it's a stone wall, the sooner you know it the better, so that you can stop before your head gets hurt. If it's a hedge, you might manage to get through. It would have been my first work to find out who was against me."

"But," said her husband, "don't I tell you that I didn't know there was anybody on the other side of the market?"

"Oh!" said his wife, impatiently, "you can always count on somebody being on the other side of the market. So you can't find out who it is?"

"We can't," said her husband.

"Very well," she said. "Now listen to me. You have got twenty-five thousand pounds in this, and if you can get all the money of Sir Cæsar and his friends to help you, I will guarantee that you will come out with double—that is, fifty thousand pounds."

"Do you mean it?" cried her husband, eagerly.

"I mean it," said his wife, solemnly.

"And may I tell Sir Cæsar that you said so?" he asked.

"No; whatever information I wish Sir Cæsar to have I will give him myself. You will tell him that you have had private information, and are not allowed to mention the dealer's name."

"Very good," said Madax, with an intense relief in his face.

"Do not let it get out," continued his wife. "Use all your force and see if you can raise the market, and as soon as the price gets up, sell out at once. Have all your plans made for selling out. Promptness is the thing in these matters. Now I must go. I will drop you down at your office."

Mr. Madax knew what his wife said about the markets generally came true, so he, in great jubilation, telegraphed Sir Cæsar Camp and others to meet him at his office, and they did so. He told them that he had private information about the market, and, after some slight hesitation, they all went in. He arranged with them that the sale would be made at once after the rise.

Next day it was announced that a million of money was put against the corner, and wheat sprang up a few

SHE LET HERSELF INTO THE HOUSE WITH HER LATCHKEY.

"WELL, TA-TA. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!"

points, but not as much as they had expected it would. Madax could have sold out without loss, but saw that he would not double his money, for the corner was stronger than any of them had thought; but after the slight rise down went the price of wheat again. The very bottom seemed to have dropped out of the market. Madax's twenty-five thousand pounds were swept out of sight, and so was the million that his deluded friends had put in with him. All confidence that Madax had put in his wife had now departed, so he merely telegraphed to her that he was ruined, and went home a broken man.

About eight o'clock that night a carriage drove up to the door, and his wife sprang out and let herself into the house with her latchkey. When she entered the room her husband never looked up, but she crossed to where he sat and patted him gleefully on the back.

"Come, come, my poor infant. Cheer up!" she said.

Madax's only answer was a groan of anguish.

"And so your little twenty-five thousand has gone with the rest?" she said.

"You told me I would double my money," he said, "and I believed you."

"Of course you believed me, and here it is," she said, taking a check from her purse. "There's my check for fifty thousand pounds, so you have doubled your money."

"What do you mean by that?" said her husband, looking up.

"Mean? You poor child! I mean that I am the head of your corner. It doesn't matter now who knows it. That was the reason I had Sir Cæsar and the others dining with me. I had no idea that you were on the other side, and when you told me that you could get them to assist, it seemed too good to be true; for I did want that million. Husbands are of some use, after all. Now, my boy, you take that check, and go down to Monte Carlo. I may be able to go after all this work is over. I am very much obliged to you for the million you threw in my way, and consider it cheap at fifty thousand pounds. Draw on me for all your expenses while you are at Monte Carlo. I am sure you will find the tables much less expensive than the London wheat market. I am sorry that I can't stay with you, but I am on for a dinner in the City. Those who were with me in the wheat corner are giving me a dinner to-night, and I am due there at nine o'clock. I am sorry I can't wait to see the children. Give them my love, and tell them I will run down in a few days and pay them a visit—that is, unless you take them with you to Monte Carlo. It must be lovely down there just now. Well, ta-ta. Take care of yourself and your check. I may see you at Monte Carlo."

And with that she left the room, and was waving good-by from the carriage window as the dazed man stood watching her through the open door, before he had quite realized the situation.

A CHEMICAL DETECTIVE BUREAU.

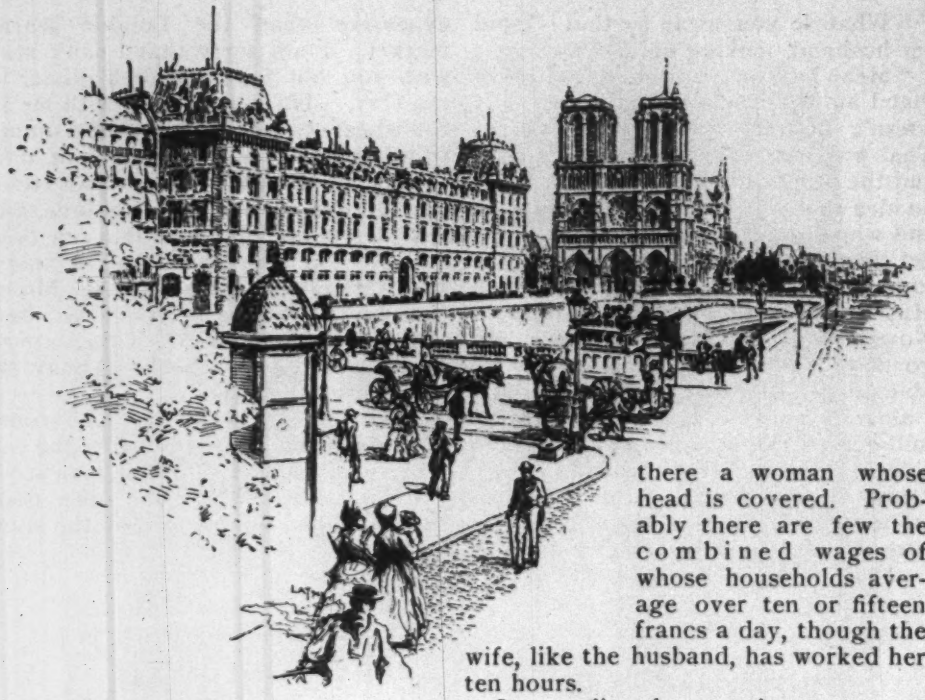
THE PARIS MUNICIPAL LABORATORY AND WHAT IT DOES FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH.

By Ida M. Tarbell.

"THE Municipal Laboratory," said a physician to me in Paris, "is a chemical police service. Instead of a surveillance over men, it exercises one over compositions. It searches for poisons, microbes, and adulterations, just as the ordinary police searches for assassins, thieves, and embezzlers."

With this remark in mind when I went to see the Municipal Laboratory for myself, I was not surprised to find it installed, as a department of the police, in the Prefecture, a massive pile of buildings facing Notre Dame, and standing in the very heart of Paris. Here it occupies some seventeen rooms in the basement and ground floor. Its present organization dates from 1881, but it really began five years earlier in a station established to detect artificiality in the coloring of wine. The purposes expanded until now the end of the department is to give the people of Paris full information regarding the composition of the food and drink offered for their consumption, and of various other articles (including children's toys and anarchists' bombs) likely to do them harm.

The force employed to prosecute the manifold work of the department consists of a laboratory director, M. Charles Girard, who has been at the head of the institution since the beginning, and may be said, indeed, to have created it; an assistant chief, Monsieur M. Dupres, to whom some of the most ingenious and convenient contrivances peculiar to the laboratory are due; a body of chemists who devote themselves to analysis, each having his specialty of wine, milk, water, or other substance; and a body of expert inspectors, a sort of chemical patrol, which, armed with microscopes and endowed with full police power, is free to penetrate into the inner oven of the bakery, the bottommost pit of the gro-



THE PREFECTURE OF POLICE, PARIS, WHERE THE MUNICIPAL LABORATORY IS HOUSED.

cer's cellar, to take the top layer off every display and look behind every garnish, to confiscate and destroy if it deems best, and to bring back in any case samples of everything suspicious it sees.

The inspectors bring in the larger number of the samples analyzed in the laboratory. In 1889, out of eighteen thousand one hundred and seventeen specimens analyzed, twelve thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight had been submitted by them. But the public is no indifferent patron. Is the coffee muddy, the milk blue, the wine sour, the meat tough, madame or monsieur appears forthwith at the desk where samples are received, to demand an explanation. There is something highly picturesque in the group that gathers in the obscure and rather dingy office. Often there is much that is amusing, so extraordinary are the specimens they submit, the theories they advance. And there is, too, no little that is pathetic. They are not often rich, these people. Most of them wear blouses or black aprons, and rarely is there a woman whose head is covered. Probably there are few the combined wages of whose households average over ten or fifteen francs a day, though the wife, like the husband, has worked her ten hours.

One realizes here, perhaps, as never before, what it means to be poor—that you are the first victim, not alone of epidemic and contagion, but of man's violence and fraud; that because you have not great things, the little that you have shall be taken away. He realizes, too, what such a service may do towards restoring the quality of the poor man's food, and he understands why it is that the proudest boast of M. Girard and his associates is that they have helped to give the Paris workingman better bread and meat and wine.

The name of the article, the date of its receipt, the address of the depositor, and that of the merchant said to have sold it, are noted, and a receipt given the applicant, with directions when to return for the result. The kind of analysis desired is also entered; that is, whether simply a judgment on the quality of the goods presented—the analysis usually asked for by the public and for which there is no charge—or a quantitative analysis, which is a report on the exact chemical constitution. Though the quantitative analysis is less frequent than the qualitative, it yields a revenue not to be despised. In 1889 this amounted to

INTERIOR OF THE PARIS MUNICIPAL LABORATORY. FROM A PAINTING BY J. F. GUELDRY.

thirty-nine thousand and seventy-five francs.

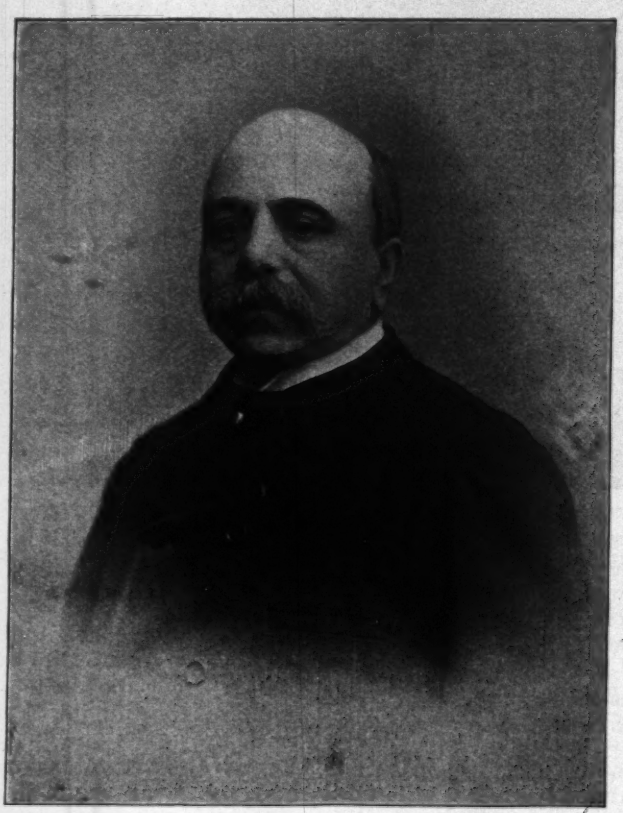
The laboratories into which the heterogeneous collection of wines and liquors, milk and water, sugar and butter, brass pans and toys, bon-bons and spices, meats and vegetables, fire-crackers and dynamite bombs, pickles and canned goods goes, are, in principle, like all laboratories, but still have an air of their own. The scientific operations, too, are those familiar everywhere; yet the direction they take is decided by Parisian habits, and makes the laboratory in a way a reflection of the domestic economy of the city.

Thus no one of the rooms I visited was busier than that devoted to wine. In fact, in 1889, out of eighteen thousand one hundred and seventeen analyses made, six thousand four hundred and fifty were of wines. The proportion is only in keeping with the consumption of the city, which averages about one hundred and fifty million dollars a year, and it is in harmony with the numberless evils which, from the beginning to the end of the life history of a bottle of French wine, combine to ruin its character.

These evils begin with making. Even if the natural process be followed, and the wine made honestly by fermenting fresh grapes, there are various dangerous stages which make manipulations necessary. Suppose that the grapes have been, perforce, gathered before properly ripe. There is an excess of acid in the ferment which must be counteracted, and the sugar must be increased. There are delicate and approved methods for accomplishing this, but they are not always handled skilfully or conscientiously, and some of them give opportunity for a sort of official watering; that is, prescribe a formula which saves the wine

and demands enough water to double the vintage.

If the wine escapes in making, it is subject to a multitude of maladies afterwards, which must be treated; and it happens sometimes, as in human medicine, that the remedy is worse than the disease. Litharge, for example, is added to counteract acidity, and is transformed into acetate of lead. Alum is frequently used in diseased wines to give them a certain youthfulness; salt and plaster are standard remedies. But an excess of any one of these substances, or their employment in connection with certain other substances, may result in compounds positively ruinous to the health.



M. CHARLES GIRARD, CHIEF OF THE PARIS MUNICIPAL LABORATORY.

With such manipulations it is only in abusing them, wilfully or ignorantly, that the harm lies. There are others not in themselves harmful, and the chief of them is watering. Thirty years ago this was done in a bold and gross way, simply by adding so much water. It was a fraud, but nobody's health was injured by it. To-day science has come to the aid of the defrauder. Wine weakened by water is strengthened by alcohols of inferior quality, made from grains and beets, producing drunkenness much more quickly than the natural alcohol, and entailing more fatal results. To restore the color lost in watering, various coloring matters, animal and vegetable, are used. The very bouquet is imitated.

But science does still more for the defrauder than this. All of these processes suppose a basis of grape juice. Science has found a way to make wine without this supposed essential, and so perfectly that connoisseurs and chemists hesitate to pronounce it false.

By mixing alcohol, water, saline and coloring matters, and a substance known as the oil of French wine, a composition is produced which many an expert will pass as a natural wine. There is one serious difficulty about this product, however. The oil which furnishes its savor and bouquet is, unhappily, a dangerous poison, a small quantity of which injected into the veins of a dog kills him in less than an hour.

It is the business of the laboratory to decide if any of the manipulations and falsifications hinted at above have been practised on the samples submitted to it. Expert tasters begin the work, and give their judgment on savor, color, bouquet. The chemist then takes it, testing all its fixed and volatile qualities by his sure and delicate processes.

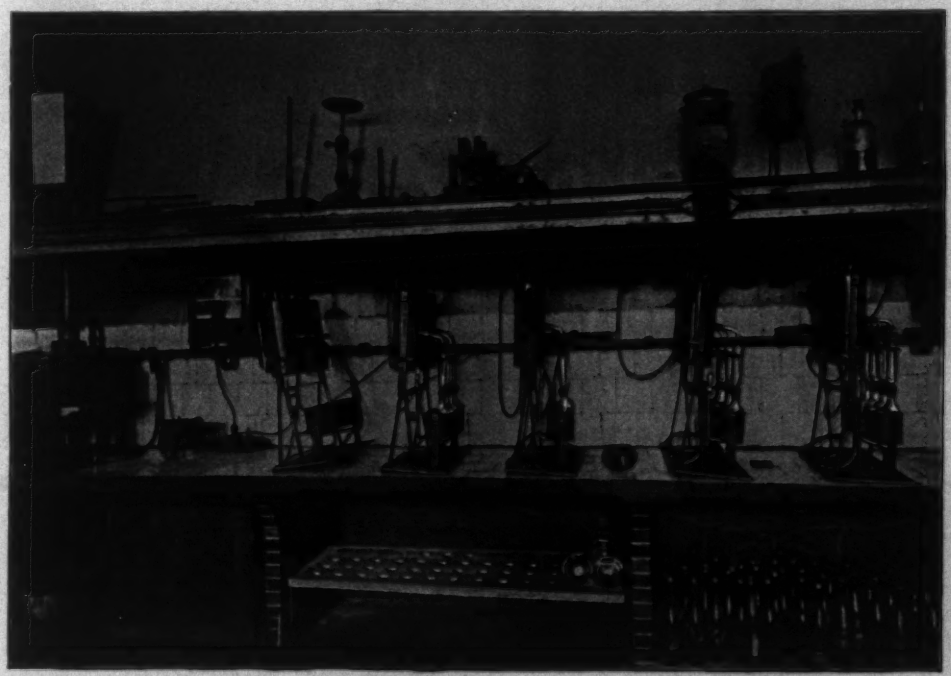
These long and careful examinations

give the laboratory the right to speak with decision on the quality of the samples submitted to it. The positiveness of its assertions and its relentless war on defrauders have naturally made it enemies. There are those who complain that the publicity given to the frauds will in the end ruin the foreign wine trade of France. But they have never silenced the laboratory. Its rigor has made the public watchful of what it buys, and more intelligent in the "points" which even an ordinary wine should show. The practice of watering it has greatly decreased.

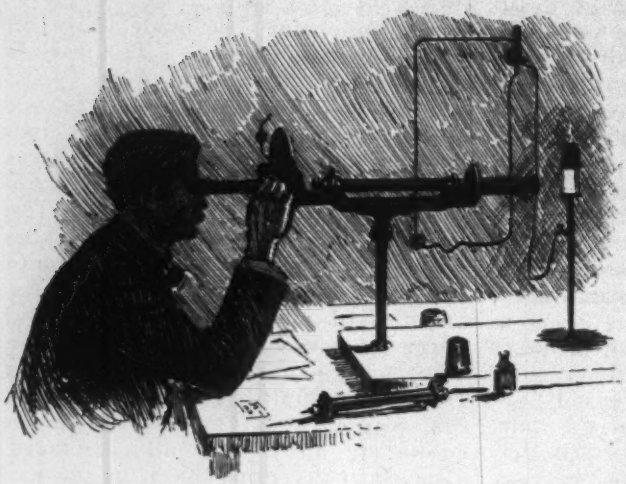
The public health is not the only gainer. The city treasury gains largely by the decrease of the frauds practised on alcoholic drinks. In 1844 Gay Lussac estimated that Paris lost fully one-third of the *octroi* on wines and liquors because of the falsification which went on inside of the city walls. That it is a matter of importance one realizes when he remembers that of the thirty million dollars in *octroi* which the city put into her pocketbook in 1889, about thirteen million dollars came from the duty on wines and alcohols.

Side by side with the wine analysis in the laboratory are made those on beer, liquors, and ciders. The work is considerable on the first, for the use of beer has made rapid progress in France in recent years. In 1879 only two hundred and ten thousand hectolitres were drunk in Paris. In 1889 *octroi* was paid on 353,122.2 hectolitres. The *brasserie* has become a formidable rival of the *café*. The adulterants of beer, as those of wine, call all the discoveries of science to their aid, and make compounds which for savor, color, and bouquet deceive all ordinary consumers. Malted grains, hops, yeast, and water, the normal materials for producing beer, are all displaced. Glucose or glycerine takes the place of malt. For hops are used beef oils, aloes, quassia, absinthe, gentian, colocynth, salacine, island moss, orange and lemon peel, and various other substances. Alum is used to clear it. The color is improved by caramel, chicory, and various manufactured mixtures.

But it is not only in the making that dangerous compounds are employed. If the dealer fears the beer will not keep, he heats it with such substances



APPARATUS FOR TESTING MILK.



IN THE DARK ROOM. THE POLARIMETER.

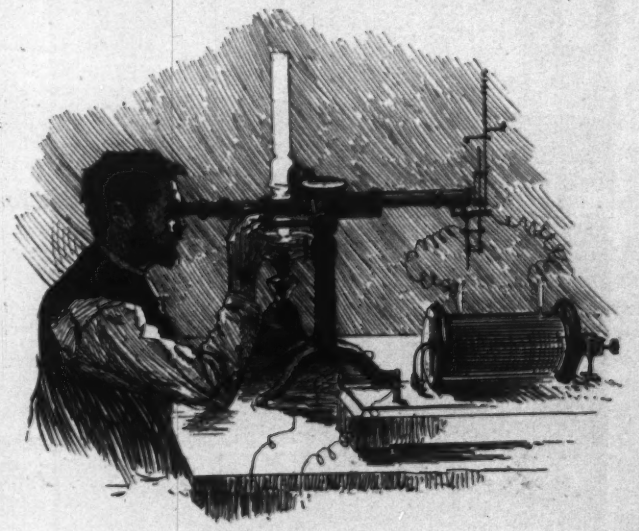
as boric and oxalic acid. Nor is this the end of the list of dangers which the laboratory signals in beer. Among the most fatal are the copper, lead, or zinc compounds which it may take up from the vessels in which it has been made, or from the pipes and faucets of the casks and reservoirs in which it is kept.

Though alcoholic drinks are in excess in the laboratory, I found that they did not absorb it. Milk, "the wine of the children," has been since the beginning one of its chief objects of investigation. In 1881, when the investigations of the milk supply of Paris began, 50.6 per cent. of the samples analyzed were "bad." In a year, thanks to the vigor of the service, this percentage was reduced to 30.7. In 1889 10.6 per cent. of impure were found on three thousand seven hundred and ninety-five analyses.

I was curious to get the judgment of the laboratory on the Paris water, for I had been remonstrated with persistently for drinking it. I applied to one of the chemists in the department devoted to water analyses, who, for reply, took out several bottles containing waters of the various kinds used, and named according to their source, water of the Vanne, Dhuis and Arve.

"These waters," he said, "have stood here a week. They are absolutely pure, answering to the laboratory standard of wholesome water in all particulars. A city could not have a more satisfactory water supply than we have now. It is true that it is only since last spring that there has been enough that is pure for the entire city. In the environs, the water is positively dangerous."

This water department of the Municipal Laboratory has rendered another service to Paris in showing the danger of using the wells, of which there have been a great number within the walls. The well water is heavily impregnated with lime, and the Paris bakers claim that a sponge mixed with it is much lighter and better than that mixed with hydrant water. If in baking all possible germs were killed, there would be no danger in allowing the practice, but the laboratory has found that the heat of the oven is not sufficient. Typhus and cholera microbes both might pass through a baking unharmed. When



IN THE DARK ROOM. THE SPECTROSCOPE.

IN THE DARK ROOM. THE MICROSCOPE.

this was established, the inspectors began a vigorous campaign against the wells, destroying them from the foundations.

The importance of thus superintending the bakers is evident when it is remembered that in Paris no one bakes at home, and that bread and pastry are always bought. Nothing could be more inviting than the public *boulangeries* and *patisseries*. They are models of neatness, good taste, and tempting displays. But "things are not always what they seem," and there are more points to oversee in these shops than the water with which the bread is mixed.

The flour gives the Municipal Laboratory no little trouble. It is found mixed with sand, chalk, plaster, alum, phosphate of lime, carbonate of magnesium, even sulphate of copper. Wheat flour is adulterated with cheaper kinds, as rye, barley, corn, pease, beans, lentils, rice, millet, buckwheat, potatoes, even with fine sawdust. Then butter is replaced by oleomargarine; the sugar with that "sweetened illusion" saccharine. If the cakes escape the adulterated flour, butter, and sugar, they still run the chance of being colored with some injurious substance. A cake is a work of fantasy in Paris. It imitates everything created or manufactured, from a canary bird to a Swiss chalet. To carry out such ambitious designs, colors must be employed, and frequently they are poisonous, though the laboratory has published a careful list of what materials can be employed safely in coloring sugars and bon-bons.

The inspection of the markets is an especially interesting part of the service, for the cleverest devices are practised in disguising tainted fruits, vegetables, and meats, and in keeping the attention of the inspector away from the weakest spot in the stock. The agent must match address with address. In case fraud is found in any of the perishable articles, it is confiscated on the spot.

A great deal of half-spoiled merchandise is found in the carts of the wandering merchants. The confiscation of the stock is almost always a sad business. Women and decrepit men form the body of this band of merchants, and the loss often must take away the bread from them and their children.

In the survey of the butcher shops, one duty is to make sure that horse, ass, and mule meats are not masquerading as beef. Not that their sale is forbidden. On the contrary, the Municipal Laboratory itself has declared this sort of nourishment "an excellent thing." It simply demands that the meat be sold as equine and not bovine, and that the animals which furnish it be not decrepit or diseased.

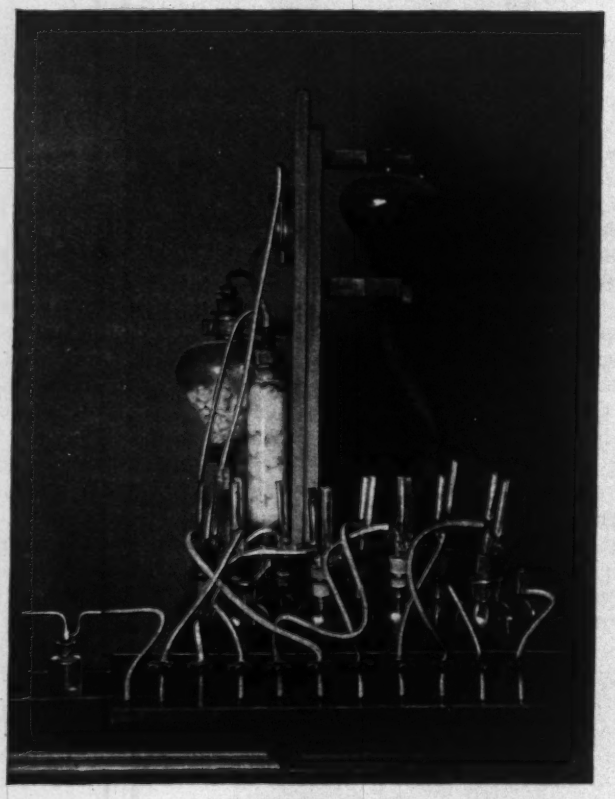
The first point is regulated by establishing shops especially for the sale of horse meat. Or, if it is sold from a cart or in a regularly licensed butcher shop, by requiring that it be marked plainly. The sale of horse meat has grown to enormous proportions since the first shop was established in 1866. The estimate is, that it is eaten now in a third of the Parisian households. In 1891 twenty-one thousand two hundred and thirty-one horses, sixty-one mules, and two hundred and seventy-five asses were sold in the Paris shops. The meat costs about half as much as beef.

The inspectors find a great deal to do in the groceries. The adulteration is particularly common in spices, tea, coffee, chocolate, and canned goods.

I was particularly struck by the number of cooking utensils I saw heaped up in one of the rooms at the laboratory. "Confiscations of the inspector," said the chemist.

"Do you survey kitchens, then?"

"Certainly," he responded. "Every dish used in a public restaurant of Paris, either in the kitchen or for the table; every pot, pan, and utensil in the bakeries; and every beer faucet in the wine shop—in short, everything used in preparing or serving foods, is under the care of the inspector. The law forbids the use of lead, zinc, and galvanized iron in the manufacture of cooking vessels. It orders that all copper vessels be tinned and kept in good condition. It directs that pottery which is covered with a glaze containing enough oxide of lead to yield to a feeble acid be seized. It orders that tin cans never be soldered on the inside, and that the materials used in their manufacture be conformed to a certain standard. It is the inspector's business to look after all these things."



APPARATUS FOR TESTING WATER.

"And the results?"

"That depends. There are establishments in Paris, like the great restaurants, which employ a skilled tinner regularly, and their utensils are always in order. In many little shops kept by women the copper vessels are the pride of the establishment, but in many others they are, unhappily, neglected. In 1889, out of two hundred and fifteen samples analyzed here, ninety-seven contained lead."

We had reached the office where the samples are handed in. A woman was at the desk with a bit of cheap colored candy, which one of the service was examining. "It is no doubt this stuff," he was saying, "which has made your baby sick. You must not buy colored bon-bons."

"There," said my guide, "is one of the reassuring parts of our service.

That woman will receive to-day a lesson she will never forget. All her neighbors will hear it from her, and it will probably become a tradition in her family that colored sweets are dangerous. Very often, too, we give them simple methods for detecting frauds. Thus they become their own inspectors."

"Do they often prosecute the dealers?" I asked, as the woman vented her wrath in a torrent of invectives against the merchant who would sell poisons, threatening him with arrest and imprisonment.

"No. We advise them not to. For they rarely have proof to show that the sample came from the merchant charged with selling it, and they not only lose the case, but pay expenses. Their best plan is to change merchants. As they are obliged to leave the address of the person charged with selling the goods, our inspectors examine his stock, and if the samples taken are bad, they give the court the information, which enables it to punish him promptly."

"But the merchant may be deceived?"

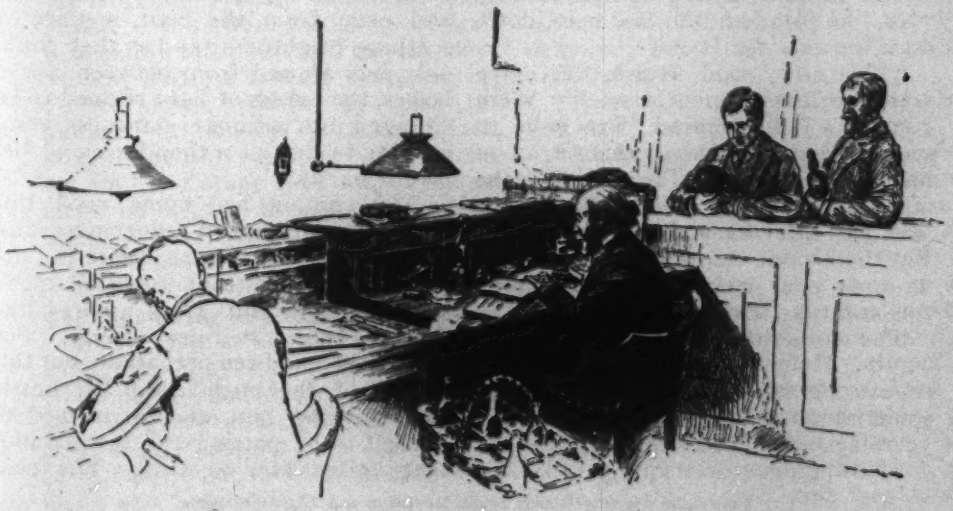
"Of course. But it is his business to know the quality of what he sells. To aid him we publish full reports of processes for detecting frauds, and the laboratory is as free to him as to the retail buyers. Indeed, we urge merchants to submit samples before giving large orders, and we have arranged it so that they need not go to the trouble of bringing them here, but may leave them at the police station of their quarter, and we return them the analyses. As a rule, of course, the dealer regards us as his enemy; but we are his friend if he is an honest man, protecting him from the manufacturer."

"But the manufacturer may be ignorant of the dangerous quality of the materials he employs."

"According to French law such ignorance is a crime, and we do our best to inform him. Take the matter of coloring toys, for example. We publish a full list of dangerous coloring substances. We show the poisonous compound which may result from the use of certain materials in wines and beers. We show the effects of every suspected method, of every suspicious element, in the preparation of foods and drinks and the manufacture of articles. So if the manufacturer knows his business, he need not produce goods unfit for the market."

"And you hope some day, I suppose, to prevent his doing so; to know for a certainty that nothing tainted, adulterated, or watered is sold in Paris?"

He smiled cynically. "When the Prefecture of Police is unnecessary, the Municipal Laboratory will be also; but not before."



THE EBB TIDE.

A TRIO AND QUARTETTE.

By Robert Louis Stevenson and Lloyd Osbourne.

Authors of "The Wrecker," etc.

"*There is a tide in the affairs of men.*"

PART II.—The Quartette.—*Concluded.*

CHAPTER XI.—*Continued.*

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

HUISH read the letter with the innocent joy of amateurs, chuckled gustfully to himself, and reopened it more than once after it was folded, to repeat the pleasure; Davis meanwhile sitting inert and heavily frowning.

Of a sudden he rose; he seemed all abroad. "No!" he cried. "No! it can't be! It's too much! It's damnation! God would never forgive it."

"Well, and oo wants him to?" returned Huish, shrill with fury. "You were damned years ago for the 'Sea Rynger,' and said so yourself. Well, then, be damned for something else, and 'old your tongue."

The captain looked at him mistily. "No," he pleaded, "no, old man, don't do it."

"'Ere now," said Huish, "I'll give you my ultimytum. Go or st'y w'ere you are; I don't mind; I'm goin' to see that man and chuck this vitriol in his eyes. If you st'y I'll go alone; the niggers will likely knock me on the 'ead, and a fat lot you'll be the better! But there's one thing sure: I'll 'ear no more of your moonin', mullygrubbin' rot, and tyke it stryte."

The captain took it with a blink and a gulp. Memory, with phantom voices, repeated in his ears something similar, something he had once said to Herrick, years ago it seemed.

"Now, gimme over your pistol," said Huish. "I 'ave to see all clear. Six shots, and mind you don't wyste them."

The captain, like a man in a nightmare, laid down his revolver on the table, and Huish wiped the cartridges and oiled the works.

It was close on noon; there was no breath of wind, and the heat was scarce bearable, when the two men came on deck, had the boat manned, and passed down, one after another, into the sternsheets. A white shirt at the end of an oar served as a flag of truce; and the men, by direction, and to give it the better chance to be observed, pulled with extreme slowness. The isle shook before them like a place incandescent; on the face of the lagoon blinding copper suns, no bigger than sixpences, danced and stabbed them in the eyeball; there went up from sand and sea, and even from the boat, a glare of scathing brightness; and as they could only peer abroad from between closed lashes, the excess of light seemed to be changed into a sinister darkness, comparable to that of a thunder-cloud before it bursts.

The captain had come upon this errand for any one of a dozen reasons, the last of which was desire for its success. Superstition rules all men; semi-ignorant and gross natures like that of Davis, it rules utterly. For murder he had been prepared; but this horror of the medicine in the bottle went beyond him, and he seemed to himself to be parting the last strands that united him to God. The boat

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carried him on to reprobation, to damnation; and he suffered himself to be carried passively consenting, silently bidding farewell to his better self and his hopes.

Huish sat by his side in towering spirits that were not wholly genuine. Perhaps as brave a man as ever lived, brave as a weasel, he must still reassure himself with the tones of his own voice; he must play his part to exaggeration, he must out-Herod Herod, insult all that was respectable, and brave all that was formidable, in a kind of desperate wager with himself. So the young soldier may jest as he goes into the battle; so perhaps, of old, the highwaymen blasphemed on the scaffold.

"Golly, but it's 'ot!" said he. "Cruel 'ot, I call it. Nice d'y to get your gruel in! I s'y, you know, it must feel awf'ly peculiar to get bowled over on a d'y like this. I'd rather have it on a cowld and frusty morning, wouldn't you? (Singing.) *'Ere we go round the mulberry bush on a cowld and frusty mornin'*. (Spoken.) Give you my word, I 'aven't thought o' that in ten year; used to sing it at a hinfant school in 'Ackney—'Ackney Wick it was. (Singing.) *This is the way the tyler does, the tyler does*. (Spoken.) Bloomin' 'umbug. 'Ow are you off now for the notion of a future styte? Do you cotton to the tea-fight view, or the old red 'ot Boguey business?"

"Oh, dry up!" said the captain.

"No, but I want to know," said Huish. "It's within the sp'ere of practical politics for you and me, my boy; we may both be bowled over, one up, t'other down, within the next ten minutes. It would be rather a lark, now, if you only skipped across, came up smilin' t'other side, and a hangel met you with a B. and S. under his wing. 'Ullo,' you'd s'y: 'come! I tyke this kind.'"

The captain groaned. While Huish was thus airing and exercising his bravado, the man at his side was actually engaged in prayer. Prayer, what for? God knows. But out of his inconsistent, illogical, and agitated spirit, a stream of supplication was poured forth, inarticulate as himself, earnest as death and judgment.

"Thou Gawd seest me!" continued Huish. "I remember I had that written in my Bible. I remember the Bible, too, all about Abinadab and parties. Well, Gawd!" said he, apostrophizing the meridian, "you're goin' to see a rum start presently, I promise you that!"

The captain bounded.

"I'll have no blasphemy!" he cried, "no blasphemy in my boat."

"All right, Cap," said Huish. "Anything to oblige. Any other topic you would like to suggest: the ryne-gyge, the lightnin' rod, Shykespeare, or the musical glasses? 'Ere's conversytion on tap. Put a penny in the slot, and — 'ullo! 'ere they are!" he cried. "Now or never! Is 'e goin' to shoot?"

And the little man straightened himself into an alert and dashing attitude, and looked steadily at the enemy.

But the captain rose half up in the boat, with eyes protruding.

"What's that?" he cried.

"Wot's wot?" said Huish.

"Those—blamed things," said the captain.

And indeed it was something strange. Herrick and Attwater, both armed with Winchesters, had appeared out of the grove behind the figure-head; and to either hand of them, the sun glistened upon two metallic objects, locomotory like men, and occupying in the economy of these creatures the places of heads—only the heads were faceless. To Davis, hit between wind and water, his mythology appeared to have come alive, and Tophet to be vomiting demons. But Huish was not mystified a moment.

"Divers' 'elmets, you ninny! Can't you see?" he said.

"So they are," said Davis with a gasp. "And why? Oh, I see, it's for armor."

"Wot did I tell you?" said Huish. "Dyvid and Goliar all the w'y and back."

The two natives (for they it was that were equipped in this unusual panoply of war) spread out to right and left, and at last lay down in the shade, on the extreme flank of the position. Even now that the mystery was explained, Davis was hatefully preoccupied, stared at the flame on their crests, and forgot, and

then remembered with a smile, the explanation.

Attwater withdrew again into the grove, and Herrick, with his gun under his arm, came down the pier alone. About half way down he halted and hailed the boat.

"What do you want?" he cried.

"I'll tell that to Mr. Attwater," replied Huish, stepping briskly on the ladder. "I don't tell it to you, because you plyed the trucklin' sneak. Here's a letter for him; tyke it, and give it, and be 'anged to you!"

"Davis, is this all right?" said Herrick.

Davis raised his chin, glanced swiftly at Herrick and away again, and held his peace. The glance was charged with some deep emotion, but whether of hatred or fear, it was beyond Herrick to divine.

"Well," he said, "I'll give the letter." He drew a score with his foot on the boards of the gangway. "Till I bring the answer, don't move a step past this."

And he returned to where Attwater leaned against a tree, and gave him the letter. Attwater glanced it through.

"What does that mean?" he asked, passing it to Herrick. "Treachery?"

"Oh, I suppose so!" said Herrick.

"Well, tell him to come on," said Attwater. "One isn't a fatalist for nothing. Tell him to come on and to look out."

Herrick returned to the figure-head. Half way down the pier the clerk was waiting, with Davis by his side.

"You are to come along, Huish," said Herrick. "He bids you look out, no tricks."

Huish walked briskly up the pier, and paused face to face with the young man.

"W'ere is 'e?" said he, and to Herrick's surprise, the low-bred, insignificant face before him flushed suddenly crimson and went white again.

"Right forward," said Herrick, pointing. "Now, your hands above your head."

The clerk turned away from him and toward the figure-head, as though he were about to address to it his devotions—he was seen to heave a deep breath—and raised his arms. In common with many men of his unhappy physical endowments, Huish's hands were disproportionately long and broad, and the palms in particular enormous; a four-ounce jar was nothing in that capacious fist. The next moment he was plodding steadily forward on his mission.

Herrick at first followed. Then a noise in his rear startled him, and he turned about to find Davis already advanced as far as the figure-head. He came, crouching and open-mouthed, as the mesmerized may follow the mesmerizer; all human considerations, and even the care of his own life, swallowed up in one abominable and burning curiosity.

"Halt!" cried Herrick, covering him with his rifle. "Davis, what are you doing, man? *You* are not to come."

Davis instinctively paused, and regarded him with a dreadful vacancy of eye.

"Put your back to that figure-head, do you hear me? and stand fast!" said Herrick.

The captain fetched a breath, stepped back against the figure-head, and instantly re-directed his glances after Huish.

There was a hollow place of the sand in that part, and as it were a glade among the cocoa-palms, in which the direct noonday sun blazed intolerably. At the far end, in the shadow, the tall figure of Attwater was to be seen leaning on a tree. Toward him, with his hands over his head, and his steps smothered in the sand, the clerk painfully waded. The surrounding glare threw out and exaggerated the man's smallness; it seemed no less perilous an enterprise, this that he was gone upon, than for a whelp to besiege a citadel.

"There, Mr. Whish. That will do," cried Attwater. "From that distance, and keeping your hands up like a good boy, you can very well put me in possession of the skipper's views."

The interval betwixt them was perhaps forty feet; and Huish measured it with his eye, and breathed a curse. He was already distressed with laboring in the loose sand, and his arms ached

bitterly from their unnatural position. In the palm of his right hand, the jar was ready; and his heart thrilled, and his voice choked, as he began to speak.

"Mr. Hattwater," said he, "I don't know if ever you 'ad a mother—"

"I can set your mind at rest: I had," returned Attwater. "And henceforth, if I might venture to suggest it, her name need not recur in our communications. I should perhaps tell you that I am not amenable to the pathetic."

"I am sorry, sir, if I 'ave seemed to tresparse on your private feelin's," said the clerk, cringing and stealing a step. "At least, sir, you will never pe'suade me that you are not a perfec' gentleman. I know a gentleman when I see him; and as such, I 'ave no 'esitation in throwin' myself on your merciful consideration. It *is* 'ard lines, no doubt; it's 'ard lines to have to hown yourself beat; it's 'ard lines to 'ave to come and beg to you for charity."

"When, if things had only gone right, the whole place was as good as your own?" suggested Attwater. "I can understand the feeling."

"You are judging me, Mr. Attwater," said the clerk, "and Gawd knows how unjustly! '*Thou Gawd seest me*,' was the tex' I 'ad in my Bible, w'ich my father wrote it in with 'is own 'and upon the fly leaft."

"I am sorry I have to beg your pardon once more," said Attwater; "but, do you know, you seem to me to be a trifle nearer, which is entirely outside of our bargain. And I would venture to suggest that you take one—two—three—steps back; and stay there."

The devil, at this staggering disappointment, looked out of Huish's face, and Attwater was swift to suspect. He frowned, he stared on the little man, and considered. Why should he be creeping nearer? The next moment, his gun was at his shoulder.

"Kindly oblige me by opening your hands. Open your hands wide—let me see the fingers spread, you dog—throw down that thing you're holding!" he roared, his rage and certitude increasing together.

And then, at almost the same moment, the indomitable Huish decided to throw, and Attwater pulled the trigger. There was scarce the difference of a second between the two resolves, but it was in favor of the man with the rifle; and the jar had not yet left the clerk's hand, before the ball shattered both. For the twinkling of an eye, the wretch was in hell's agonies, bathed in liquid flames, a screaming bedlamite; and then a second and more merciful bullet stretched him dead.

The whole thing was come and gone in a breath. Before Herrick could turn about, before Davis could complete his cry of horror, the clerk lay in the sand, sprawling and convulsed, but beyond sin or suffering.

Attwater ran to the body; he stooped and viewed it; he put his finger in the vitriol, and his face whitened and hardened with anger.

Davis had not yet moved; he stood astonished, with his back to the figure-head, his hands clutching it behind him, his body inclined forward from the waist. Attwater turned deliberately and covered him with his rifle.

"Davis," he cried, in a voice like a trumpet, "I give you sixty seconds to make your peace with God."

Davis looked, and his mind awoke. He did not dream of self-defence, he did not reach for his pistol. He drew himself up instead to face death, with a quivering nostril.

"I guess I'll not trouble the Old Man," he said; "considering the job I was on, I guess it's better business to just shut my face."

Attwater fired; there came a spasmodic movement of the victim, and immediately above the middle of his forehead, a black hole marred the whiteness of the figure-head. A dreadful pause; then again the report, and the solid sound and jar of the bullet in the wood; and this time the captain had felt the wind of it along his cheek. A third shot, and he was bleeding from one ear; and along the levelled rifle, Attwater smiled like a red Indian.

The cruel game of which he was the puppet was now clear to Davis; three times he had drunk of death, and he must look to drink of it seven times more before he was despatched. He held up his hand.

"Steady!" he cried, "I'll take your sixty seconds."

"Good!" said Attwater.

The captain shut his eyes tight, like a child; he held his hands up at last with a tragic and ridiculous gesture.

"My God, for Christ's sake, look after my two kids," he said; and then after a pause and a falter, "for Christ's sake. Amen."

And he opened his eyes and looked down the rifle with a quivering mouth.

"But don't keep fooling me long!" he pleaded.

"That all your prayer?" asked Attwater, with a singular ring in his voice.

"Guess so," said Davis.

"So?" said Attwater, resting the butt of his rifle on the ground, "is that done? Is your peace made with Heaven? Because it is with me. Go, and sin no more, sinful father. And remember that whatever you do to others, God shall visit it again a thousand fold upon your innocents."

The wretched Davis came staggering forward from his place against the figure-head, fell upon his knees, and waved his hands and fainted.

When he came to himself again, his head was on Attwater's arm, and close by stood one of the men in divers' helmets, holding a bucket of water, from which his late executioner now laved his face. The memory of that dreadful passage returned upon him in a clap; again he saw Huish lying dead, again he seemed to himself to totter on the brink of an unplumbed eternity. With trembling hands he seized hold of the man whom he had come to slay; and his voice broke from him like that of a child among the nightmares of fever: "Oh! isn't there no mercy? Oh! what must I do to be saved?"

"Ah!" thought Attwater, "here is the true penitent."

CHAPTER XII.

A TAIL-PIECE.

On a very bright, hot, lusty, strongly blowing noon, a fortnight after the events recorded, and a month since the curtain rose upon this episode, a man

might have been spied praying on the sand by the lagoon beach. A point of palm trees isolated him from the settlement; and from the place where he knelt the only work of man's hand that interrupted the expanse was the schooner "Farallone," her berth quite changed, and rocking at anchor some two miles to windward in the midst of the lagoon. The noise of the trade ran very boisterous in all parts of the

island; the nearer palm trees crashed and whistled in the gusts, those farther off contributed a humming bass, like the roar of cities; and yet, to any man less absorbed, there must have risen at times over this turmoil of the winds the sharper note of the human voice from the settlement. There all was activity.

Attwater, stripped to his trousers and lending a strong hand of help, was directing and encouraging five Kanakas. From his lively voice, and their more lively efforts, it was to be gathered that some sudden and joyful emergency had set them in this bustle; and the Union Jack floated once more on its staff. But the suppliant on the beach, unconscious of their voices, prayed on with instancy and fervor; and the sound of his voice rose and fell again, and his countenance brightened and was deformed with changing moods of piety and terror.

Before his closed eyes, a skiff had been for some time tacking towards the distant and deserted "Farallone;" and presently the figure of Herrick might have been observed to board her, to pass for a while into the house, thence forward to the forecastle, and at last to plunge into the main hatch. In all these quarters, his visit was followed by a coil of smoke; and he had scarce entered his boat again and shoved off, before flames broke forth upon the schooner. They burned gayly; kerosene had not been spared, and the bellows of the trade incited the conflagration. About half way on the return voyage, when Herrick looked back, he beheld the "Farallone" wrapped to the topmasts in leaping arms of fire, and the voluminous smoke pursuing him along the face of the lagoon. In one hour's time, he computed, the waters would have closed over the stolen ship.

It so chanced that, as his boat flew before the wind with much vivacity, and his eyes were continually busy in the wake, measuring the progress of the flames, he found himself embayed to the northward of the point of palms, and here became aware at the same time of the figure of Davis immersed in his devotion. An exclamation, part of annoyance, part of amusement, broke from him, and he touched the helm and ran the prow upon the beach not twenty feet from the unconscious devotee. Taking the painter in his hand, he landed, and drew near, and stood over him. And still the voluble and incoherent stream of prayer continued unabated. It was not possible

for him not to overhear the suppliant's petitions, which he listened to some while in a very mingled mood of humor and pity, and it was only when his own name began to occur and to be conjoined with epithets, that he at last laid his hand on the captain's shoulder.

"Sorry to interrupt the exercise," said he, "but I want you to look at the 'Farallone.'"

The captain scrambled to his feet, and stood gasping and staring. "Mr. Herrick, don't startle a man like that!" he said. "I don't seem someways rightly myself since—" he broke off. "What did you say, anyway? Oh, the 'Farallone,'" and he looked languidly out.

"Yes," said Herrick, "there she burns; and you may guess from that what the news is."

"The 'Trinity Hall,' I guess," said the captain.

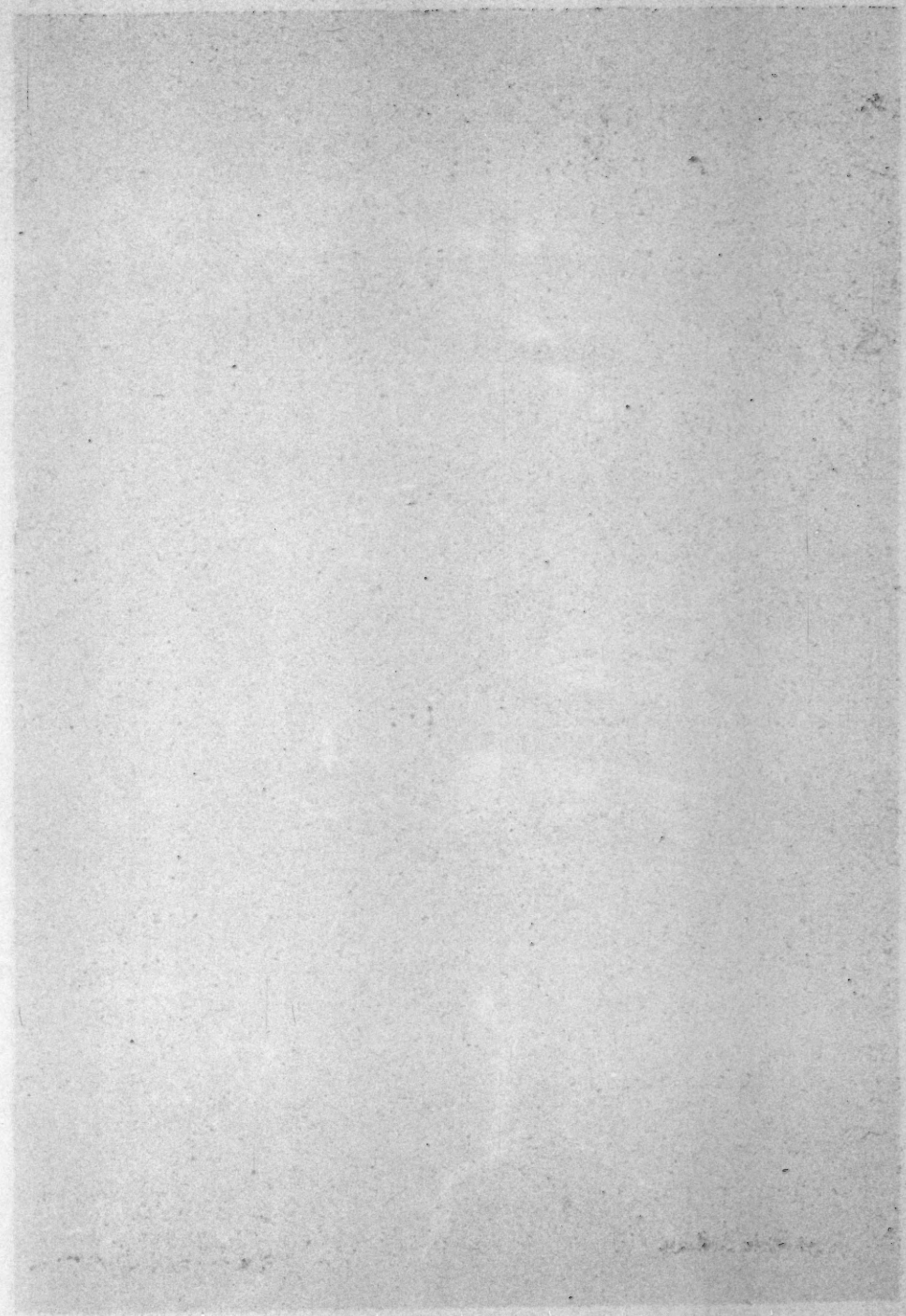
"The same," said Herrick, "sighted half an hour ago, and coming up hand over fist."

"Well, it don't amount to a hill of beans," said the captain with a sigh.

"Oh, come, that's rank ingratitude!" cried Herrick.

"Well," replied the captain, meditatively, "you mayn't just see the way that I view it in, but I'd most rather stay here upon this island. I found peace here, peace in believing. Yes, I guess this island is about good enough for John Davis."

"I never heard such nonsense!" cried Herrick. "What! with all turning out in your favor the way it does—the 'Farallone' wiped out, the crew disposed of, a sure thing for your wife and family, and you yourself Attwater's spoiled darling and pet penitent!"

"Now, Mr. Herrick, don't say that," said the captain, gently, "when you know he don't make no difference between us. But, oh, why not be one of us? Why not come to Jesus right away, and let's meet in yon beautiful land? That's just the one thing wanted; just say, 'Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief!' and He'll fold you in His arms. You see, I know; I have been a sinner myself."

THE END.